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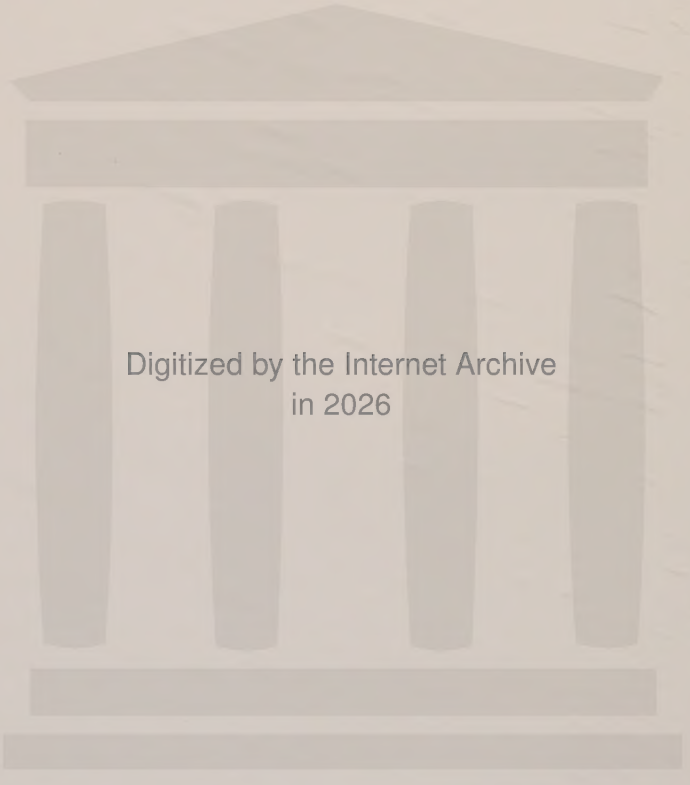
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S. Viney
18 Augt 1848

THE

HISTORY OF DISSENTERS,

DURING

THE LAST THIRTY YEARS,

(FROM 1808 TO 1838.)

1774-1862

BY JAMES BENNETT, D.D.

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PREFACE.

THIRTY years having elapsed since the first edition of the History of Dissenters was published, during which period one of the Authors has been permitted, in a good old age, to rest from his various useful labours; the survivor has attempted to bring down the work to the present time, by recording the events which have since formed an extraordinary æra, deeply interesting to Dissenters, and amply sufficient to fill another volume. New sects have continued to arise, to swell the catalogue of those who have separated from the Establishment; a grand legislative change has, after mighty struggles, altered and improved their position in society; theological

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controversies of great importance have called forth the polemical powers of dissenting writers; the statistics of the several denominations have exhibited important alterations; the dissenting colleges, multiplied and improved, have diffused the advantages of an educated ministry among those who are excluded from Oxford and Cambridge; and the biography of Dissenters has been enlarged by the memoirs of distinguished men who have left behind them names "that posterity will not willingly let die."

Short as is the chapter on new sects, it is longer than the lover of Christian union could wish to see it; while the disproportionate extent of the history of religious liberty requires no apology, as it is the result of conflicts that have left more cause for gratitude than regret. Posterity will be benefited by a detail of improvements in the legislation of our country, which formerly exhibited a strange contrast of practical liberty with legislative intolerance. If the records of the theological seminaries should

prove less interesting to general readers, ministers will be gratified with the history of institutions which gave them access to the fountains of sacred learning, and fitted them more efficiently to serve the church, and control the movements of the world. In the controversies that are recorded, the spirit of the times will appear; and if the more ephemeral or less important are unnoticed, those polemical publications are enumerated which have had most influence on the principal questions in debate. The external condition of Dissenters belongs to the department of statistics, which, however improved in modern times, has yet done but little in the domain of religion, and still less in that of dissent. All that can now be effected to secure accuracy and extent of information leaves still more to be desired; and while individuals may, in their own locality, correct errors and supply defects, they who have attempted this, on a large scale, will be most sensible that an approximation to perfect statistical details is the utmost that can be honestly professed.

Of the inward state of Dissenters, or their personal piety, which is the primary object of consideration in the history of a people that exist only for religion, it would have been easy to speak at random; but instead of vague eulogies, or censures, facts have been specified; and such an attempt has been made to reason upon them, as will assist the reader to form his own estimate. The difficulty of this task is attested by the variety, and inaccuracy of the opinions entertained concerning the religion of the first Christians, though recorded by an inspired pen; and no two independent minds will form exactly the same estimate of the religious state of any portion, or period, of the church.

The chapter of Biography proves how truly it is said, "That abundance may create a sense of want." Numerous were the endeared names that had been marked out for insertion; but when the respective limits came to be assigned to each division of the history, it was found

impossible to afford space for one tenth of those whom the partialities of friends might pronounce worthy of this preference. A proportionate number has been selected from each denomination; and distinguished worth, or extensive usefulness, has turned the scale in favour of each name. The Memoirs of Tutors in Colleges, who died in their office, being introduced into the history of their several institutions, the Biographical list is really more comprehensive than it appears. A long catalogue of names and dates might have been attempted; but as it must have omitted more than it recorded, it would have provoked rather than satisfied the demand for, "honour to whom honour is due."

This last period, which brings down the history of Dissenters to the present day, is necessarily less recondite than the three former; but it has been scarcely less embarrassing by the redundance, than they were by the paucity of materials; and though the present generation may

not feel so much interest in that which many already knew, every day will give additional value to the history of a people, that proves as it advances in years, the immortality of its principles, and the salutary extent of its influence on our country, on the church of God, and on the world.

If the following pages betray the mind of a Dissenter towards the Establishment, and of an Independent towards other denominations beyond its pale, the author alone is responsible to the public and the church, while he can reiterate the sentiments of the preface he wrote thirty years ago—that opposition to an ecclesiastical system, far from implying the condemnation of those who espouse it, may be combined with esteem, not only sincere, but ardent, for Christian excellence, wherever it may be found; and happy is he to see it often so eminent in those who are most remote from his own communion, that he cannot but say, "Such they are, that I wish they were our own." While labouring,

sometimes, perhaps, unsuccessfuly, to do justice to all, nothing has been more consoling to the historian of Dissenters than the recollection, that the differences among Christians, though numerous, and not unimportant, are far outweighed by the greater considerations, which constitute them " all one in Christ Jesus."

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HISTORY OF DISSENTERS.

CHAPTER I.

NEW SECTS.

The history of Dissenters opened with an account of the four religious communions that formed the general body, for whose sake the legislature passed what is called the Toleration Act, our first charter of religious freedom. To the Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists, and Quakers, were added, in the second period, the Methodists and Moravians; and, in the third, the Sandemanians and Swedenborgians. The fourth, on which we now enter, has been as fertile in new denominations as any period of equal length, though the increasing liberality of the times has suffered to pass unnoticed such an event as the rise of a sect, which formerly shook society to its centre. As, however, some of the new communions are little else but modifications, or amalgamations, of those that already existed, it will not be necessary to enlarge on their principles; and a religious society that is but of yesterday, and has never been persecuted into importance, can afford but scanty annals. Priority of time claims the precedence for those with whom we commence.

The Scotch Baptists.

If, as might naturally have been supposed, this title merely designated Scotchmen who adopt the principles of the Baptists, they would not have constituted a new sect; but they form a body of Dissenters in England, which is not confined to the natives of North Britain, and they hold tenets which completely separate them from the English Baptists. This new denomination of English Dissenters may, perhaps, be most compendiously and clearly described as a compound of Sandemanianism with Antipædobaptism. The Sandemanians arose in Scotland, and the sect before us, which combines some of the peculiarities of Glas and Sandeman with those of the Baptists, sprang from the same country. Coming into the south, its adherents were distinguished from others who reject infant baptism, by the designation of *Scotch* Baptists, even when the societies were composed of Englishmen. Sandeman's strenuous opposition to the principles of the Baptists, neither prevented his followers from becoming Baptists, nor hindered Baptists from becoming Sandemanians; till, at length, a modification of the two sects produced a third, which, in Scotland, includes the majority of those who reject infant baptism, and, in England, constitutes a body of Baptists, separated from the rest as by a brazen wall.

The Scotch Baptists entertain Sandemanian views of the pastoral office, almost sinking it in the mutual exhortations of the brethren; and while the English Baptists are becoming more liberal, admitting Pædo-

baptists to the Lord's supper, the sect before us excludes, not only Independents, but also those Baptists who do not adopt Sandemanian church polity.

With an honourable zeal for the sole authority of Christ in the church, and a laudable diligence in the study of the Scriptures, this communion is not distinguished, either for diffusing the knowledge of the Word of God among the ignorant, or for displaying its harmonising effects on those who enter into their views. Their societies have been recruited, chiefly by proselytes from other sects; and as the attention they pay to the points on which they differ from their fellow Christians, naturally engenders a disputatious spirit, they explode and send off again to proximate communions those who become tired of endless discussion and minute division. Intent on forming a perfect church, they are diverted from the end for which the church exists on earth, the glory of Christ in the propagation of the Gospel. The consequences of this error are beginning to appear, in a disposition to make adult immersion essential, not only to Christian communion, but also to salvation; and as extremes meet, some of these ultra Protestants are verging towards the Popish tenet which inseparably associates, if not absolutely identifies, baptism with remission of sins. The originator of this divergence from the previous orthodoxy of the sect, is a Mr. Campbell of America, whose views, though not clearly defined, have been, to a considerable extent, adopted by some of the Scotch Baptists in England, much however to the grief of others, who now denounce the man they had highly extolled.

A small Baptist church existed in Scotland from the time that Cromwell's victory at Dunbar made him the lord of that land; but, at the Restoration, this society, which was probably composed of soldiers who were Baptists, expired. About the year 1765, Mr. Robert Carmichael, and Archibald Maclean of Glasgow, left the Independents, and formed the first Scotch Baptist church in Edinburgh. Several kindred societies afterwards arose in Glasgow, Dundee, Montrose, and other places. They were much reduced by separations, and agitated by the question of the eternal sonship of Christ; and some of their number fell into Socinianism. They received, however, frequent accessions, and Mr. Charles Stuart, who had given up the charge of the parish of Cramond and become a physician, joined the church in Edinburgh, on which he conferred some distinction. But though he was a man of property, of considerable learning, and critical skill in the Scriptures, he afforded little aid to the cause; for he was restless, disputatious, and not long satisfied with anything. He separated at last from their communion, though he continued to defend their views. Mr. Moncrief, who had much increased the church at Glasgow, was taken away by an early death. There were societies on similar principles formed at Whitehaven, Chester, Hull, Beverley, and London; but in 1795 their whole number north of the Tweed did not amount to four hundred.

After they had existed some time in Scotland, without making much noise, or progress, they were excited to greater activity, about the beginning of the 19th century, by the Messrs. Haldanes, who had

quitted the establishment and devoted themselves to the propagation of the Gospel. Having commenced their benevolent efforts, without any definite sentiments on Church government, they afterwards adopted, with the ardour of a new conviction, those of the Independents, and becoming at length Scotch Baptists, they laboured to extend this sect, not only among their own countrymen, but also in England and Ireland. They sent preachers to London, Portsmouth, Nottingham, and other towns; but the congregations which were raised were small, and in many instances betrayed symptoms of dissolution, rather than of extension, or even of continuance. As a sect of Dissenters in England, the Scotch Baptists are not entitled to a large space in history, either for their numbers, the eminence of their preachers and writers, or their influence on the public mind. Not indigenous, they seem not likely to be naturalised; but accord better with the genius of the Scotch, who enter keenly into minute distinctions, than with the temper of the south, which has never shown much taste for the Sandemanian leaven.

Independents in Scotland.

As the object of this history was to record the principles and struggles of those who have formed religious communions separate from the English hierarchy, little notice was taken of the ecclesiastical affairs of Scotland; and as the powerful bodies of seceders in that country generally approved the constitution of the national church, from whose corruptions

alone they professed to separate, they were not, in the strictest sense, Dissenters. But the Independent churches that have been formed beyond the Tweed, during the last thirty years, are so identified with those in the south, that this chapter would scarcely be complete without a sketch of that branch of Independency which has arisen in Scotland, during the former part of the nineteenth century.

Sandemanianism has been called Scotch Independency; and, for many years, Scotland contained scarcely any other modification of the system. After the decisive battle of Dunbar, in 1640, an order passed the House of Commons, "for Mr. Joseph Caryl and Mr. Owen to proceed to the army in Scotland, agreeably to the desire of the general."* As the Scotch had declared themselves bound by the Covenant to avenge the King's death, and were sworn enemies to all Sectaries, by which term the Independents were specially designated, the Parliament and Cromwell seem to have aimed at giving a better idea of Independency, by sending northward the principal Independent divines, in hopes, probably, of producing the same progress from the Presbyterian to the Independent system, as was then exhibited in England. To the declaration of the Parliament, was added another by Cromwell, addressed "to all that are saints, and partakers of the faith of God's elect in Scotland," assigning reasons for rejecting Presbyterian church government, and defending the army against the charges of heresy and blasphemy. There is sufficient

* Whitelock, p. 450.

evidence that Owen did not much approve his anomalous position in the train of a conqueror. We have on record two sermons preached by that celebrated divine, while on this expedition, and they give proofs of a wise forbearance on the points in which he differed from the Scotch and of a devout consecration to the objects in which all Christians agree. One was preached at Berwick, and the other at Edinburgh; but they are printed together, as a single discourse, under the title of "the Branch of the Lord, the Beauty of Zion, or the Glory of the Church in its relation to Christ." In the dedication to Cromwell, the preacher says "it was with thoughts of peace that I embraced my call to this place, in time of war. That this was my chief design, to pour out a savour of the Gospel on the sons of peace, I hope was manifest to all, since my coming hither. Though some may be so seasoned with the leaven of contention, about carnal things, or, at best, the 'tithing of mint and cummin,' as to disrelish the weightier things of the Gospel, the great owner of the vineyard hath not left me without a comfortable assurance, that even this labour in the Lord has not been in vain." Far from encouraging the victorious army of Independents to force their system upon the vanquished, the preacher closes with this paragraph: "See hence the ruin of persecution, that has appeared in the world in various forms. It has put on all manner of colours and pretences, and prevailed with all sorts of persons, at one time or other, to close with it. What has been the issue? What is likely to be? The house, indeed, has been battered, sometimes, but they who have

come against it, have been all broken in pieces. Shall the residue of men, who under new pretences, or old ones, new painted, drive on the design, prosper? Thou, O Lord Jesus, in thine anger wilt cut them off. The Lord open the eyes of the sons of men, that they may not hope any more to separate between Christ and his saints, between whom there are so many everlasting relations."* Strange as it may appear, the pacific tone of this discourse was the grand offence to those who thought themselves bound, by covenant and by oath, to extirpate whatever they deemed heresy and schism. The world had never before exhibited such a triumph of religious principle over physical force, the chaplain of a victorious general, pleading for the rights of conscience, against the vanquished advocates of persecution. When, therefore, the Scotch Presbyterians gloried that Independency, with Owen at its head, was vanquished in their country, they claimed a victory where no battle had been fought. For, though the Independents in the army treated their theological opponents with as little ceremony as might be expected from men with victorious weapons in their hands, the Independent ministers devoted themselves to their proper work, the inculcation of piety towards God and charity towards men. In Glasgow, indeed, Mr. Hugh Binning, a zealous Presbyterian, is said to have confuted Cromwell's ministers; but as this was in the presence of the general, it proves, at least, that the Presbyterians felt themselves at liberty to defend their kirk.

* Owen's Sermons and Tracts.

They were soon left to contrast the forbearance of the Independents with the cruelties of the Episcopalians. The Revolution left the Presbyterians in undisturbed possession, till what are called, in Scotland, the Old Independents, arose, in 1787, and made a near approach to English Independency. Mr. Henry Davidson, minister of the parish of Galashiels, may be considered as the father of the new communion. He was the friend of Boston, the author of "The Fourfold State of Man," and like him, was weaned from a fondness for national churches, by the contentions that arose in the Scotch establishment. In conjunction with Mr. Wilson, he formed an Independent church, to which he administered the ordinances of religion, while continuing to officiate in the parochial pulpit, which he was suffered to do as long as he lived. Mr. Smith, minister of the parish of Newburn, adopted, also, Independent principles, in consequence of reading Sandeman's letters. Mr. Robert Ferrier, while holding the parish of Largo, was brought to the same conclusion, which induced him to form an Independent church. These ministers were joined by Mr. David Dale, who rose from poverty to great wealth, by introducing into Scotland Arkwright's machinery. Disgusted with the violence that forced a minister upon the parish, he withdrew and built an Independent chapel in Glasgow, where he eventually became pastor. The native vigour of his mind raised him above the defects of his early education, and his ardent piety employed his wealth in promoting the cause of religion beyond the bounds of his own communion.

There were thirteen of these churches in Scotland, containing about two hundred and fifty members. They entered into some sort of connection with what are called the Inghamites in this country, and may be said to form a middle link between the Sandemanians and the English Independents, if that term can be applied to inhabitants of Scotland.

But it was not till the year 1797, that a church was formed avowedly on the plan of those which in England are called Independent, or Congregational. A few pious persons in Aberdeen, deploring the darkness and formality that reigned around them, united together on Independent principles. The leader in this movement was Mr. George Moir, one of the wisest and best of men, who had been proselyted to Independency by yielding to the natural effect of reading Lord Chancellor King's "Account of the Primitive Church." The author of this history having visited Aberdeen, to open the chapel built by the infant society, officiated there for a short time. Nine persons avowed, in the presence of a large assembly, their Independent principles, and pledged themselves to walk in fellowship according to that order. "The little one soon became a thousand," and, from this, several other churches have arisen, who have contended for purity of communion, in opposition to an amalgamation of the church with the world.

At the same time, Messrs. Robert and James Haldane, at Edinburgh, procured a spacious building called the Circus, and invited Mr. Rowland Hill, from London, to officiate there. He was succeeded by other English ministers, and large congregations were

gathered. The originators of the movement in Scotland were at first favourable to Mr. Hill's more latitudinarian system; but they soon altered their sentiments and became Independents. To this, perhaps, "A Pastoral Caution" published by the General Assembly of the Scotch Kirk contributed; for the zealous efforts of the new Evangelists to diffuse the Gospel, by tracts, Sabbath schools, and itinerant preaching, roused the established clergy, not to imitation, but to opposition, and to solemn warnings against excessive zeal. Though a new building capable of containing three thousand persons was erected to accommodate those who first assembled at the Circus, the congregation so increased, that it was deemed desirable for Mr. Aikman, one of the preachers, amicably to withdraw, and form an Independent church, for which he erected a chapel. New and large societies were formed under Mr. Ewing at Glasgow, and Mr. Innes at Dundee, both of whom had been ministers of the Scotch establishment. Mr. Ralph Wardlaw formed a second Independent church at Glasgow. By the liberality of Mr. Robert Haldane an academy was formed at Edinburgh for the education of ministers, who went forth and planted churches in many of the towns of Scotland. When the munificent patrons of these schemes became Scotch Baptists, some of their coadjutors followed them; but most of the ministers, adhering to Independency, went on diffusing their principles. A new seminary was formed at Glasgow, under Mr. Ewing and Dr. Wardlaw, by whom many valuable men were trained up for the ministry among the Independents.

But as infant churches are usually small, and seldom contain many of the rich, and as the new Independent congregations were gathered in small towns, a Congregational Union was formed to assist in supporting the pastors, and extending their labours to the dark parts of the country. About 1300*l.* per annum are raised for these objects, and when the poverty of the country, and of many of the congregations, is considered, their zeal and liberality will be found entitled to great praise. Many ministers are thus enabled to itinerate in the Highlands and isles of the north west, and some candid men of other communions have pronounced the Congregational Union the most useful body in Scotland. For a quarter of a century it has formed an efficient Home Missionary Society, which sends out from forty to fifty valuable labourers, some of them being entirely supported, and others greatly assisted by the Union. They have chiefly devoted themselves, with most laudable self-denial, to the remote and more thinly peopled portions of the country, where the inhabitants would not otherwise hear the Gospel. Unfettered by the boundaries of parishes, or the authority of synods, they go where there is ignorance to be instructed, or vice to be counteracted by the saving power of the Gospel. The Report published by the Union in 1836, says, "there has never been a period more memorable for the energy and progress of congregational churches in this country, than that which has intervened between the present and the last anniversary. Since the beginning of the past year, eighteen churches connected with the Union have had pastors ordained

over them, (several never enjoyed that blessing before,) pastors, we trust, given them by God, according to his own heart, to feed them with knowledge and understanding."

The acknowledged eminence of some of the ministers of this body, "whose works praise them in the gates," being "seen and read of all men," has contributed powerfully to commend their principles to their countrymen. As the paramount interests of truth and piety have been, to the conviction of all parties, eminently promoted by the Independents in Scotland, they have received from various quarters assistance in carrying on their benevolent labours.

If this account of the new body of Independents in Scotland has been exclusively historical, it is because there was no necessity for specifying principles and practices which are virtually identical with those of the English Independents. With a slight peculiarity of spirit, arising from the difference between the Scotch and English nations, there is also a trifling discrepancy of practice. Many of the Independent churches in Scotland, not only celebrate the Eucharistic supper every Lord's day, but hold that this is proved to be a duty by the practice of the Christian churches when under the guidance of the inspired apostles. This, however, produces no alienation from the English, who celebrate the supper every month, for Independent pastors of both countries are welcomed to each other's pulpits, whenever divine Providence affords opportunities for this fraternal interchange.

Ireland also partook of the movements which dif-

fused Independency over Scotland. Mr. Walker, fellow of Trinity College, Dublin, who had quitted the ministry of the established church, adopted a species of Sandemanianism, and Mr. Kelly, whom his father, one of the judges, had destined to the state priesthood, followed in a similar track, each of them officiating to Independent societies, in Dublin, or its vicinity. But in the sister isle other congregations arose, more in harmony with the Independent churches of England. In Dublin, one of them was under the pastoral care of Mr. Cooper, who had been early distinguished in this country by preaching to the Jews, and another is now under the ministry of his son. At York Street chapel, where ministers from England for a long time preached, Dr. Urwick is now pastor. The efforts of that useful body, the Irish Evangelical Society, have increased the number of these churches, which amount to about thirty. Their academy for educating ministers will be mentioned in another place. The identity of the new Scotch and Irish Independent churches with the principal body of English Dissenters, and the fraternal intercourse that is maintained between the ministers and members of the communion through the whole empire, seemed to require this account of the extension of the Independent denomination into Scotland and Ireland, though not strictly within the limits of a history of Dissenters in England.

The Southcottians.

The Southcottians, or Joannites, as they are frequently called, may scarcely seem to deserve a place

among sects; but as the historian is bound to record facts, whatever may be their merits, it is necessary to exhibit those new formations which have attracted even ephemeral notice, and swelled the number of those who have renounced the established communion. Joanna Southcott, who gave both name and birth to this sect, was the daughter of a farmer at St. Mary Ottery's, in Devonshire. From the establishment, she went into the Wesleyan Methodist Society, from which she was expelled for obtruding upon the public her pretended visions. To these, however, she attracted considerable attention, about the year 1791, and though her claims to inspiration were refuted by the principles which she herself promulgated, she soon found some credulous enough to regard her as a prophetess.

At length, she announced herself to be the woman mentioned in the twelfth chapter of the Revelation, and some deluded or designing persons having gathered round her, she formed congregations, of which the most distinguished was in the borough of Southwark, in a building entitled, by emphasis, *The house of God.* Here she pretended to seal "the hundred and forty and four thousand," conferring that honour in a paper packet, on those who thought it worth half-a-crown. She proceeded, at last, so far as to declare herself, though unmarried, pregnant, in consequence of a miracle being wrought to render her the mother of another Messiah, whom she called the Shiloh. Costly preparations were made by her followers for the birth of their prince, whose cradle, which cost two hundred pounds, was exhibited as a

show. But as she had, perhaps, been deceived by the symptoms of disease, these terminated in her death. This, however, could not break the charm, or dispel the illusion she had created; for her disciples, after delaying her interment as long as possible, persisted in expecting that she would rise, with her child in her arms, though medical examiners declared that she had never been pregnant. Congregations were still gathered to maintain her pretensions; and new revelations are said to have been made to the more favoured of the sect.

The men of this society are known, in the north of the kingdom, by wearing their beards and a brown hat, and many are said to have set out for Jerusalem, in expectation of meeting Messiah, or Shiloh, there. Their worship is described as being awfully wild and tumultuous; but it finds favour with not a few in the northern counties, especially about Ashton-under-line, where they have erected a splendid temple, which cost nine thousand pounds.

Their followers have been gathered chiefly from among the more ignorant members of the Wesleyan Methodist society and of the establishment. Mr. Foley, rector of Old Swinford, near Stourbridge, was said to be one of those who expected the resurrection of Joanna Southcott; and another clergyman used to go regularly to expound her writings at Bristol. These he pronounced so sublime, that an uneducated woman, as Joanna confessedly was, could not have produced them without divine inspiration, though they consisted of doggrel rhymes below contempt. Of other sects it is our task to record the doctrines; but

this body may be said to have none; for they profess to be guided, each moment, by immediate inspiration, and one illiterate man is celebrated for strange utterances, which he dignifies with the title of divine revelations.

Of the extent, or prospects, of the society it is difficult to speak; for though they receive considerable accessions, instability seems to be the natural consequence of their irrational enthusiasm. It is gratifying to be allowed quickly to dismiss, as insignificant, a sect from which no benefit to religion, or to society, can be expected to arise.

The Irvingites.

With the person from whom this sect derives the name by which it is generally known, we must commence our account of the very anomalous and extraordinary body. In an obscure congregation, connected with the Scotch establishment, but meeting in Hatton Garden, London, appeared, in the year 1820, Edward Irving, who, as assistant to Dr. Chalmers, at Glasgow, had attracted but little notice, though, on coming to London, he seems to have determined to become "some great one." The effect of his tall figure, and patriarchal air, was aided rather than diminished by a squint and a slight Scotch accent. He read with vehemence, sermons which were carefully written, in a style that bore strong marks of the study of Milton's prose works; but the archaisms and imagery of the great poet were imitated with more success, than his powerful reasoning, and elegant rhetoric. There was,

however, enough of these, added to action and voice most outrageous, to create, in such a city as London, an ephemeral popularity.

By the influence of some of the Scotch nobility, he was soon lifted to the skies, and followed by crowds, not merely of the vulgar, but of the highest ranks; for the coronet was now seen at the conventicle. He was, at the outset, little more than the eloquent declaimer on moral themes. His "Orations," which were the first discourses he published, contained not much theology of any sort. But when the popularity which led to the erection of a large elegant gothic building in Regent's Square, began to decline, Mr. Irving changed both his style and his doctrine, becoming less rhetorical, and more mystical. Verging at once towards antinomianism and protestant popery, he strangely talked of baptismal election. Then, going off into a prophetic strain, he pretended to expound the predictions of the Old Testament, and of the Revelation, on high church principles, and became furious against Catholic emancipation, which at that time agitated the public mind. As popularity flagged, he devised some new mode of excitement; and at length broached the doctrine of the sinfulness of Christ's humanity; on which he ventured to assert horrible things. The approach of the second advent of Christ, to reign personally on the earth, and the right of the church to expect and ask the restoration of miraculous gifts, were then boldly asserted.

After this, meetings were held by ministers and lay gentlemen of various communions, at Albury park, the seat of Henry Drummond, Esq. where, under the presi-

dency of Rev. Hugh M'Neile, rector of the parish, they discussed the import of the inspired prophecies. Here Mr. Irving distinguished himself by his partiality to half formed ideas, the usual accompaniment of mysticism. At this convocation, which was held in 1826, the errors and fanaticism of some of the party were so clearly developed; that the more sober members, despairing of any good result, quitted the camp.

Miss Mary Campbell, a Scotch lady, had drawn to Fernicarrie, her residence, a concourse of devout visitors, who were so fascinated by the piety she displayed on her sick bed, as to regard it with a portion of that reverence which is accorded to prophetic inspiration. She seems herself to have concluded that some extraordinary afflatus prompted her; and when, beyond all expectation, she recovered, she determined to devote her life to the conversion of the heathen. Instead of judging by her qualifications, of the work for which she was destined, she concluded, from certain impressions and impulses, that she was called to a mission. Then, far from seeking to acquire the necessary qualifications, in the use of rational means, she prayed for them, as if she expected a miracle to be wrought upon her, as upon the apostles at Pentecost. From such prayers and expectations there was but a short step to the conclusion that she was thus miraculously endued with *the gift of tongues*. This step she took; and at first seems to have *written* strange characters, which neither she nor any others could decipher; but which the writer and her admirers concluded were the written language of some unknown heathen nation, to whom she was to be conducted, by another miracle, for their

conversion. But as their language was to be spoken, as well as written, by the missionary, she, from illegible scratches, proceeded to unintelligible voices. There was probably a sufficient portion of conceit mixed with her enthusiasm; and willing to make the unintelligibility of her writing and speaking a proof of inspiration, she never reflected that such proofs are at the command of any who think them worth having.

As one delusion leads to another, the appetite for miracles, once created, was not long without food. Among her admirers, at Greenock, a brother approached the sick bed of a sister, and commanded her, in the name of the Lord Jesus, to rise and walk. We are informed, that she, believing, though astonished, did rise and walk. An epistle to Fernicarrie announced, that the gift of miraculous healing was restored to the church, and some one commanded Mary Campbell, who it seems, was not yet perfectly restored, to rise and walk, which she did. The fraternity then attempted to give another proof of their miraculous powers, by healing a poor lame boy, who, however, did not rise and walk. It is unnecessary to say that a corpse on which they presumed to operate did not rise and live. The utterances supposed to be supernatural, were first exhibited at Port Glasgow, by two brothers named M'Donald.

Miss Campbell, who had married a Mr. Caird, was invited to London, by Mr. Irving, who pronounced these pretences the miraculous gifts for which they had been praying. After three ladies had rehearsed in private, a Mr. Taplin burst forth in the public prayer meeting; and on the morning of one Lord's day,

October 16, 1831, the congregation at the Scotch church in Regent's Square, was agitated by a Miss Hall, who professed to have been visited by such a power, that, unable to restrain it, and forbidden to speak in the congregation, she rushed into the vestry, and there exclaimed, "How dare ye to suppress the voice of the Lord?" In the evening of the same day, Mr. Taplin spoke in a tongue, as it was called, amidst the congregation, "Do you fly from the voice of God in the midst of you? Where will ye flee in the day of judgment?"

Mr. Irving seems to have been but half prepared for the hazardous experiment, and a great part of the congregation, previously wearied by orations of an hour and a half, or two hours, bewildered by his strange dogmas, and rendered doubtful of the soundness of his mind, by his repeated changes of sentiment, entirely quitted his ministry, and sought refuge in other congregations. But the morning prayer meeting constantly exhibited the new gifts to public view. Before daylight, even in the winter, crowds were seen flocking to Regent's Square, though not all with pious zeal. There Mr. Irving was seated before a single lamp, wrapped in a cloak, with theatric attitude, surrounded by his helpers. While one of these was reading a chapter, or offering a prayer, a burst of sounds made the uninitiated start and tremble and look around, to see from whence the voice issued, for, like ventriloquism, it strangely deceived the ears, and bewildered the minds of the auditors, leaving them in doubt whether the noise was that of coughing, or laughing, or of a person in a fit. At last, however,

English words, such as "He is coming," or "Why do ye not believe?" solved the mystery, and told that the former part of the noise was speaking in an unknown tongue. Women were, at first, the chief actors in this awful drama, so calculated to expose all religion, and especially the influences of the Holy Spirit, to the contempt of the infidel and the profane. Mr. Irving himself, however, never pretended to be thus inspired; though he employed all his influence to sanction the illusion; while attentive and discerning spectators were left in doubt whether he was perfectly satisfied of its origin, or suffered himself to be borne away by a torrent of enthusiastic, or designing persons, who had contrived to get him into their hands.

There seems to have been, in the whole affair, an entangled web of action and reaction, "deceiving and being deceived;" for the gifted speakers were manifestly inoculated with Mr. Irving's spirit, and spake with tongues as if they had received their afflatus from his mouth. His exposition of the prophecies furnished them with a constant theme, the immediate second coming of Christ; and the doctrine of the sinfulness of Christ's humanity was sanctioned by their uttərances, while his style of speaking was theirs, an emphatic reiteration of the same expressions, "He is coming, he is coming, he is coming." Whoever had watched Mr. Irving's eloquence could be at no loss to discover their great Apollo. The physical character of the sounds bore some resemblance to his varied energetic and exciting intonations; while they presented such an odd combination of the involuntary, with the artificial, that persons who had gone to gra-

tify their curiosity, were heard, as they went away, diverting themselves with a very exact imitation of the Babel sounds. That it was not all honest enthusiasm, was betrayed by the fact, that, finding it difficult to speak for any length of time in pure unmeaning sounds, they who began with pretending to other tongues, ended with repeating some of Mr. Irving's English oracles.

So infecting was the scene, that any excitable person, with a dash of enthusiasm in his composition, might have become, first a patient, then a convert, and finally an actor. Some who were thus carried away, ignorant of the laws and operations of the human mind, afterwards attributed the whole to satanic impulse. Mr. Baxter, a lawyer of Doncaster, in Yorkshire, was brought up to London and drawn into the vortex. After some other indications of a bewildered mind, he exhibited the tongues in a parish church, where one of his relatives officiated. But having gone to deliver an inspired message to the Lord Chancellor in his court, on finding himself unable to accomplish his object, he changed his mind, and published a pamphlet to prove that these exhibitions were the work of the devil. The book, however, proved that the author was but imperfectly restored to sound sense; for satan had little more to do with those vagaries than with the other follies and sins of mankind.

The new building called the Scotch church, though erected for Mr. Irving's ministry, having been vested, with his approbation, in trustees for the use of ministers in communion with the Scotch establishment, those

who disapproved of the tongues instituted proceedings in their ecclesiastical courts, to remove him, and succeeded. His attempt to retain the building adds one more to the numerous proofs that error perverts the conscience, while it bewilders the mind. His friends then procured for him a large room in Newman Street, and here fanaticism became the lord of the ascendant. From this place Mr. Irving often issued forth to preach in the streets, accompanied by those who sometimes spoke with the *power*, or with the *tongue*, as they called it, which the preacher assured the assembled crowd was the word of the Holy Ghost confirming the sermon.

But Mr. Irving soon began to sink under the excessive efforts of body and mind to which he had been urged; and his medical advisers pronounced a retirement to his native air essential to the preservation of his life. In Scotland, however, he continued to decline, and shortly died, the victim of fanaticism, or ambition. A sort of dying confession was published, which was painfully equivocal, seeming to indicate a wish to retract his errors, without the honest, humble decision that was necessary to such an act. His followers have been accused of garbling the confession, and the document bore internal evidence that the charge, though most disgraceful to them, was not unfounded. Mr. Irving, from being considered "the son of the morning," had fallen to the rank of a secondary being in his congregation, who took but little notice of his death. For as some of the pretenders to inspiration had been pronounced, by their fraternity, guilty of speaking by a lying spirit, while

palming the voices on the Holy Ghost, so Mr. Irving had been censured by the body for checking those who were under the genuine inspiration. He had knelt down and asked pardon before the congregation. It was manifest, some time before his departure for Scotland, that he was broken, not only in constitution, but in mind. Having lost his eloquence and energy, he sat a silent spectator of the exhibitions of those, who, either by artifice, or enthusiasm, had thrown over him a net from which he could not escape. Always defective in soundness of judgment, he had mistaken imagination for mental power, and an ephemeral popularity for permanent ascendancy. Determined to distinguish himself, he succeeded to his own ruin.

After his death, the new movements of his party were further developed, and though he had exalted the Scotch church as little else than infallible, and next to this, had eulogised the English establishment, his followers soon began to assume the form of another dissenting communion. Their fondness for prophecies led them to the Revelation for their model of church government, and they called their pastors "the angels of the churches." They pretended, also, to revive the office of *apostles*, and talked of their power to remit sins. Evangelists were ordained among them, and sent forth to propagate the sentiments of their sect. A tenth of their income was, at last, required from every member of the new church, which, as some of them are wealthy, amounts to a large sum, while it falls heavily on the poor. Their zeal was, as usual with a new sect, most ardent, and they not only preached in the highways, but some of their wealthier

members have gone to the rich and noble to deliver to them instructions and warnings, which have been better received than could have been expected. A memorial was presented to the prelates of the established church, and another to the Privy Council. By efforts so zealous, the body has been enlarged, and societies have been multiplied, not only in London, but also in various parts of England and Scotland, till they amount to sixty. These accessions have been chiefly from the established churches, and not unfrequently from the clergy and the rich, the senator and the noble. But though new and large places of worship have been erected, they have not been filled; for their preachers do not take hold of the public mind. Too mystical and declamatory to instruct, they denounce all other churches as Babylon, and exalt their own as the only true church; but furnish no convincing reasons for the preference. Their doctrine, which is not easily defined, is Arminian, rather than Calvinistic, and on some points, may be termed popish, especially in requiring the members of their church to learn the sense of Scripture, not by reading, and prayer, but from the authorised teachers, who are supposed to be under that special inspiration, which confers on them something like the infallibility of the church of Rome.

But the genius and sentiments of this communion will be best learned from their own writers. Mr. Irving was a high churchman of the Scotch kirk, and Mr. Drummond was of the church of England; but the party has been conducted to Independency. Mr. Drummond says, "Hence we see settled the long

agitated question between Episcopacy and the Independents. The Independent form of church government is that which God has appointed. The supper is observed every week, by the Lord's special direction."

As this communion is, however, frequently assuming new shapes, it is not easy to describe its actual state. The tongues, as they were called, seem to have fallen into desuetude; for, after the abandonment of the original theory, that they were the language of some unknown heathen nation, who were to be converted by these missionaries, the practice of uttering the unintelligible sounds was dropped, and speaking in the power, that is, with vehemence, broken sentences in English, succeeded. The whole communion is, indeed, the child of excitement, administered as by electric shocks, one of which will probably shiver it to atoms. Mr. Irving of the Scotch church, which is thoroughly Calvinistic, symbolised with the ultra Arminianism of Mr. Erskine, so that this body has a determined hostility to the election of grace. A Presbyterian and an Episcopalian have given birth to a new species of Independency, which has many points of resemblance to the Scotch Baptists. But time will show in what way the omniscient and almighty Sovereign of the church will cause this strange movement to promote his glory and the interests of his kingdom. At present, the communion presents no points on which a benevolent and candid mind can dwell with approbation, or even with hope. While it multiplies sects, already too numerous, it aggravates the evil of division by a most arrogant, exclusive

spirit; but we must conclude that he who guides the whirlwind, will bring order out of this chaos. Happily the times forbid all attempts at persecution, which would, in former days, have aggravated the evils that forbearance may ultimately cure. A great part of the proselytes to this sect have been won from the establishment. Persons whose prejudices against dissent have kept them at the utmost distance from all its older communions, have joined that which is the most extravagant and repulsive.

The rapid spread of the delusion having created, in a short time, sixty congregations, some of them provided with handsome chapels; and the feverish activity of the society having given a factitious importance to its movements, many were carried away with the imposing appearances, though others saw enough among them to cast discredit upon their pretensions to inspiration, or even to religious truth, or solid piety. Mr. Baxter once fixed, by inspiration, as the community affirmed, the day for the descent of miraculous powers, and an assemblage was held for that purpose, with the loftiest expectations; but it is scarcely necessary to say, the day passed away in disappointment. By the same inspiration, it was declared that at the close of three years and a half, from the 14th of January, 1832, the Lord Jesus would come again in glory; but the time passed by, with a similar result, though the church was summoned, July the 14th, and waited in vain for the event. Mr. Irving was to have been made a great prophet to Scotland; but he has gone down to the dead without this honour; many were sent forth to bear witness, through all London;

but about the end of 1832 they were called in again, to be ordained by the Spirit, and thus ended their mission. An impostor came to them from America, who induced some of them to go on an abortive errand to that land. A revelation induced them to pitch the tabernacle, by making sixty ministers to answer to its sixty pillars, which, after all, a letter from an apostle condemned, as a delusion. Several of the chief actors have been since denounced by their own party as speaking by a lying spirit, which has opened the eyes of others to the delusion, and induced them to abandon the cause. There can be no stronger proof of wicked artifice than their assertion, that the worst poison that can be put into the hands of the people is the Bible, which was designed for the priesthood, and that no one standing apart from the Irvingite ministry can understand the book. This, however, is not their only approach to the church of Rome, of which they begin to speak favourably, though Mr. Irving's strange career was distinguished by denouncing Rome as "Babylon foredoomed of God."

A leading angel of one of their churches has renounced the whole communion as under a delusion, and it is now said the prevailing revelation among them is, that which orders every one to wait where he is for some new revelation. To many it seems unaccountable that such a sect should be able to make any progress; but this wonder betrays the same ignorance as led some into the snare. They thought such professions of miraculous powers and extraordinary inspiration were unknown, since the apostles' days. But the world has scarcely ever been without them, for

any long interval of time. Miraculous gifts were supposed to be continued to the church, ages after they had ceased. The Cataphrygians, or Montanists, were the Irvingites of the second century; and Priscilla and Maximilla were the gifted ladies, whose themes were the fall of Babylon, Rome; the coming of Antichrist and the Millennium. Tertullian was their Edward Irving. Leuthard agitated the tenth century with visions and revelations; Elizabeth and Hildegandis, the twelfth; St. Francis, the thirteenth; Brigitta and the French lawyers, the fourteenth; Elizabeth Barton, Munser and Stock, the sixteenth. Conrerius was the Irving of the Moravians, who, as well as the continental Anabaptists, were disturbed and dishonoured by fanaticism. But the French prophets were the great wonder of the seventeenth century. They imported into our country unknown tongues. To America they carried their Irvingism, in combination with Southcottianism by anticipation, boasting of their mother Ann, and maintaining the sinfulness of Christ's humanity. A knowledge of these facts would have spared many well meaning persons a long season of mischievous bewilderment, and a longer period of bitter regrets that they had ever been carried away by what appeared to them miraculous, because it was to them new and unparalleled.

The Brethren denominated in the Parliamentary Returns, "Catholic, not Roman."

The name of Brethren, by which this division of Christians is more known than by any other, creates

confusion; for it has already been appropriated to the Moravians. The new sect, however, is unwilling to take any distinctive appellation, and when the officer was making up, at Plymouth, the returns ordered by Parliament, being told he might call them what he pleased, he chose to denominate them "Catholics, not Roman." They are as much anomalous as they are anonymous; for, with their reluctance to take a specific appellation, professing to be contented with the generic term Christians, or disciples of Christ, they have an equal aversion to creeds, contending that they are inefficient to secure either orthodoxy or uniformity of faith. Like the Independents in being without a creed, with them they are known to be firmly attached to what are called evangelical doctrines, which they think are better learned from Scripture than from any human formula. They attach great importance to the promise of the Holy Spirit, as the teacher promised by the ascending Saviour, to lead the Christian into the truth contained in the Scriptures, while many of them despair of his converting the world without the bodily presence of Christ. The Brethren are what would usually be termed Calvinists, some of them rather high, but all exercising forbearance with regard to the various modifications, if not to the system itself. They agree also to differ, without separation, on the questions which divide the Baptists from other Christians.

This body of Christians expect the speedy coming of Christ, but without imitating the Irvingites in fixing the time; though contending that all believers shall prepare to meet him by what they call a resurrection

life, or an entire separation from the world, and consecration to the service and kingdom of Christ. They have, therefore, adopted what may be termed a modified community of goods, not admitting that any one has a right to say to another, "Your house, or money, is mine;" but contending that every one should practically say to his brother, "All that I have is at your service." Many among them having property, and making sacrifices to their principles, their sincerity and zeal cannot be called in question. In addition to these two excellencies they profess a catholicity and expansion of view, for which some would not give them credit; but they contribute to missions not formed by themselves, and are editing valuable concordances to the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures, which are to be published at low prices. Some of these Brethren are said to have been found in Geneva, in the year 1824, and it is thought that they appeared in Ireland about the same time. They have now formed societies in about seventy places, and each congregation has usually sprung up without any assignable connection with another. They abound most in the vicinity of Plymouth; but, meeting, sometimes in chapels, and frequently in private dwellings, they may say, with the primitive Christians, "The world knoweth us not." It is, indeed, difficult for an inquirer to obtain information concerning them. Some have confounded with the Irvingites this less obtrusive body, especially when its preachers have, in the parks and streets of London, called men to repentance and righteousness. Consisting chiefly of proselytes from the establishment, and including a considerable number

of its clergy, this sect has many points of resemblance to the Quakers, especially in their horror of all pretensions to an order of priesthood, which they denounce as "the sin against the Holy Ghost." Young among dissenting bodies, they excite hope and fear; exhibiting so much truth and piety as to inspire expectations of their recovery from present errors; but betraying so much fanaticism as to make it probable that they will wander farther from the truth.

New bodies of Methodists have sprung up during the last thirty years, in addition to that earlier separation which is emphatically denominated the New Connexion. One party was called the Church Methodists, professing to cling to Mr. Wesley's original high church views, and to disapprove of the practical dissent into which the Wesleyans have diverged. The attempt to return to the establishment seems to have been abortive, and the splendid new chapel erected for this purpose at Beverley, in Yorkshire, has been closed.

The Ranters, or Primitive Methodists, have been formed into a distinct and active body. They do not differ, either in doctrine or discipline, from the original communion created by Mr. Wesley, which they consider to be fallen from its primitive simplicity, piety, zeal and usefulness, for the restoration of which the new society has been reared. The prohibition of female preaching by the Conference having given a special offence to those who recollected that this practice had formerly prevailed, the Ranters formed a rival Conference, and restored to the sisters the

liberty of prophesying. These, therefore, have formed an important part of the Primitive Methodist preachers, who go forth, not only into the villages and hamlets, but also into streets and alleys of towns and cities, calling men to repentance. They hold what are called camp, or revival meetings, in various parts of the country, and abound in displays of zeal, rude, indeed, but not always discreditable to the body, or unprofitable to the world. The preaching of women will probably drop into disuse, as the female frame is not fitted for such efforts, and the tumultuous character of their meetings will, perhaps, be corrected, as it has been among the body from which this has emanated. The preachers are, of course, uneducated; but hearers of the most cultivated minds, who have listened to them in the streets, have been agreeably surprised to find so much good sense and sterling piety delivered with so much energy and zeal, and with so little that could give just offence. This section of the Methodists has, indeed, devoted itself to a most desirable object, the care of the neglected, the instruction of the lowest of our population, who are sunken in the most degrading and ruinous ignorance and vice. The chapels of the Ranters, or Primitive Methodists, are generally small and burthened with debt, and their best efforts are made under the canopy of heaven.

What is called the "Methodist Association" arose out of the dissatisfaction felt by many of the Wesleyans in the conduct of the Conference, which they charge with virtually retracting the concessions made to the people in 1797, when "the greatest part of the

executive government, and of the superintendents' authority, was given up." But it is said that the new rules, published at the Conference office, in 1798, have been altered without notice being given. To the preachers claim of a right to expel or retain members of the Methodist Society, considerable resistance was opposed.

About the year 1835, a number of the "London Trustees," feeling concerned at the agitated state of the connexion, and believing that the agitation was generally occasioned by the arbitrary proceedings of the preachers, subscribed and published a "Declaration," in which they recommended

"That the Conference should declare, that in future there should be no expulsion from office, or membership, except by the *consent* of the majority of the meeting by whom the accused ought methodistically to be tried:—That official meetings should have the unfettered right of respectfully addressing the Conference on any methodistical question affecting their interests:—That the opinion of the quarterly meetings should be taken upon any proposed new law, and the consent of the majority obtained, before it should become the law of the connexion."

Such were the principal things they recommended, and the language employed, was to the preachers courteous and respectful.

They were desirous of avoiding any measures which might occasion an open rupture between them and the preachers, and therefore resolved, not to call public meetings, until every other measure had been tried. At the approach of the season, they prepared an "Appeal to the Conference," urging upon its attention similar topics to those contained in their

"Declaration" before referred to. In a few days, it received the signatures of upwards of one hundred official members, in the London circuits: six of the trustees went to Sheffield, to present the "Appeal," and to urge the Conference to grant its requests.

When the minutes of the Conference were published, the trustees saw it was necessary to adopt more vigorous measures; and as many official persons, who are not trustees, expressed a wish to unite with them, it was resolved to form a society, to be designated "The London Wesleyan Methodist Association." It is founded upon a recognition of the following propositions:

I. That as the HOLY SCRIPTURES contain a sufficient rule of faith and practice, the church of Christ ought not to be required to submit to any ecclesiastical human authority, or rule, except as required in the Word of God.

II. That no one class of officers in the church has authority, from the Bible, to exercise exclusive power in the government of the church.

III. That ecclesiastical history proves, that all the corruptions of Christianity originated in the depravation of the character of its ministers, and that such depravation was consequent upon their advancement in worldly rank, and upon their having been allowed, by degrees, to assume to themselves the entire government of the church.

IV. That the Wesleyan itinerant preachers have, of late, assumed to possess higher ministerial prerogatives than are claimed by any other body of Protestant Christian ministers; asserting that they have divine authority to make laws, and to enforce them, by expelling from church fellowship, whomsoever they may determine ought, for refusing to obey them, to be expelled, and now have publicly declared, in the minutes of this year, 1835, their determination to maintain those assumed prerogatives.

V. That therefore it is requisite, that all lawful and proper means be employed, to obtain for the Wesleyan societies their just and scriptural rights, as to their government, and exemption from the unscriptural ministerial domination now claimed over them. If this be not done, the character of the Wesleyan preachers will ultimately become depraved; Methodism be corrupted, enslaved, and debased, and so become a curse to the world instead of a blessing.

The Evangelical Quakers are, like the body last mentioned, a branch from an older denomination, and it is not easy to say to what extent it may form a new communion. The internal conflict among the Friends, which gave rise to this movement towards an additional sect, will be noticed in the chapter devoted to the state of religion among Dissenters. While some have so far abandoned the principles of George Fox as to join other communions and receive baptism and the Lord's supper, many who are dissatisfied with the present state of the Friends, have gone no farther than to hold separate meetings for worship, in which the Scriptures are read and expounded, their authority as a standing rule of faith and practice is maintained, and the doctrine of justification by faith is exhibited as the only path of peace. The characteristic prudence of the body is seen in the slow and cautious movements by which the separatists advance towards the formation of that society, which may, perhaps, in future be better known under the name of the Evangelical Friends.

These new sects that have sprung up during the last thirty years, are manifestly little more than modifications and amalgamations of the original bodies, or

repetitions of ancient extravagancies which had burned themselves out and expired. Deriving their members chiefly from the establishment, either immediately, or through the medium of Methodists who still clung to it, the young communions have often inspired their proselytes with ardent sectarian zeal. Each additional sect both draws off those who had no disposition to join any former body of Dissenters, and gives to the general mass, with an accession of numbers, an infusion of new blood, which, however, has sometimes more of the fire of fever than of youth. Religious liberty is thus acquiring fresh safeguards against the predominance of any ambitious sect, as well as against the interference of the state. It is, however, to be deplored, that alienation and strife usually attend the rise of a sect, while such an event now ceases to throw any new light on the doctrines of Scripture, or the methods by which Christians should maintain the worship of God, and seek the salvation of the world.

The love of domination, mental as well as physical, the offspring of pride and selfishness, is seldom cured but by circumstances, which thwart its schemes and reduce it to despair. After a long and cruel war for exclusive rule had ended in compelling what was called the church to submit to the existence of a Protestant hierarchy, the new power immediately betrayed the very spirit which it had condemned in its predecessor, and would have crushed all who refused to submit to its sway. Nor were the Dissenters, by all their sufferings, cured of the insane ambition to reign alone. Each sect has, however, found itself

followed by another, which has attracted public favour and contended for pre-eminence. The accumulating numbers lead us to suspect that it may be the design of the supreme Governor, by these minute divisions, to abate the pride of all, and prepare them for fusion into some superior form, by which the purity, as well as the unity, of the ancient church shall be restored.

CHAPTER II.

THE HISTORY OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

Towards the end of the reign of George III., the public mind in Britain took a more liberal turn. But this movement may be ascribed to the illiberal party, who, attempting to abridge religious liberty, discovered that the world had been advancing, while they were standing still. Extraordinary occurrences on the continent of Europe had their share of influence in opening the eyes of our countrymen to just views of the connexion between civil government and religion. Napoleon Buonaparte, having become emperor of France, published a decree, dated from Rome, May 17, 1809, affirming that the union of spiritual and temporal power, was a source of mischief. The papal territory, therefore, he united to the French empire, and the Inquisition he abolished, observing, that our Lord Jesus Christ sought no temporal power, but required men, in the affairs of this life, to be subject to Cæsar. The concordat which the French Emperor induced the Pope to sign, and the dominion which the victorious soldier assumed over religion in France, shewed, indeed, that he did not understand the more just and liberal principles which he advanced; but, whether he proceeded in the right direction, or the

wrong, he set men a thinking on the whole question, and common sense led to considerable improvement in the sentiments of mankind. When, therefore, Lord Sidmouth attempted to abridge religious liberty, he was surprised to find that he had opened the cage to clip the wings of an eagle, which, escaping from his grasp, took a new and bolder flight. Had the ill-starred effort been made when first projected, it had probably succeeded. For Mr. Pitt fostered such a project, directing it not merely against the dissenters, but against the evangelical clergy, whom he considered their coadjutors in disturbing the peace of society, by rousing increased attention to religion.

From the Life of Mr. Wilberforce it appears that Mr. Pitt, under the influence of his tutor, Dr. Pretyman, the bishop of Lincoln, had prepared a bill to restrict religious liberty. But the immediate occasion of this measure is thus recorded by the biographers.* "A member of parliament,† who, on his accession to a large fortune by his father's death, discontinued the practice of the legal profession, but who acted as a magistrate, with a considerable sense of his own importance, got into a quarrel with a person who came to be licensed as a dissenting teacher. Finding the applicant very ignorant and somewhat forward, he at first resisted the man's claim, but discovering that the law clearly entitled him to a license, on paying the specified fee of a shilling, or sixpence, he warmly exclaimed, 'that if such was the law, then it should not continue so.' Accordingly, he considered how best to introduce some discre-

* Rev. Robert Isaac, and Samuel Wilberforce.

† Michael Angelo Taylor.

tionary power to magistrates in granting, or withholding of dissenting ministers' licenses. His purpose reached the ears of the dissenters and methodists of the city which he represented in parliament, and he soon found, that, if he persisted in his endeavour, it would be at the expense of his seat. He set himself, therefore, to devise how best to get out of the difficulty, and actually prevailed on Mr. Pitt to adopt his measure. The regulations tended materially to restrict the freedom hitherto enjoyed by protestant dissenters; a fine for the first offence, and imprisonment for the second, were the sanctions by which they were to be enforced.

"I lost no time, (says Mr. Wilberforce,) in conferring with Mr. Pitt on the subject; but he had been strongly biassed in favour of the measure by Bishop Pretyman, on whom I urged in vain the serious consequences that must infallibly ensue. We spent some hours together, and I confess I never knew, till then, how deep a prejudice his mind had conceived against the class of clergy to whom he knew me to be attached. (Mr. Pitt had before called them rascals.) It was in vain, I mentioned to him, Mr. Robinson of Leicester, Mr. Richardson of York, Mr. Milner of Hull, and Mr. Atkinson of Leeds. He thought ill of their moral character, and it clearly appeared that the prejudice arose out of the confidence he reposed in the Bishop of Lincoln. All I could obtain was an assurance, that the measure should not actually be introduced without his giving me another opportunity of talking over the matter with him. Happily that opportunity never occurred; of course I was in no hurry to press for it, and the attempt never was resumed: but some years

after, when Lord Sidmouth's memorable bill was in progress, Lord Redesdale stated that he well remembered, that, during Mr. Pitt's administration, a stronger bill had been in contemplation, and he did not know why it had been dropped. From this association of the evangelical clergy with the dissenters, there is reason to suspect that the restriction of religious liberty, if carried against dissenters, would have been introduced into the pale of the establishment."—*Wilberforce's Life*, vol. i. p. 362.

In the year 1809, Lord Sidmouth moved in the House of Peers, for "a return of the number of persons who had obtained licenses to become dissenting ministers, during the last fifty years." This inaccurate language, coming from such a quarter, and so generally adopted, seems the result of design. For the law knows nothing of licenses for the religion of dissenters, whose ministers are required to take certain oaths, and their places to be registered, of both which the proper officers are required to give certificates. Though the professed object of Lord Sidmouth's motion was to prevent improper persons from escaping civil burdens, by obtaining certificates as dissenting ministers, the dissenters took the alarm, and called a meeting at Dr. Williams's library on the 15th of June, 1809; as it was manifest that the real object was to check that increase of dissenters, at which the archbishop of Canterbury expressed his alarm, while joining the Lord Chancellor in professions of attachment to religious toleration.

The Methodists were roused by a movement which seemed to be aimed especially at them; for their ene-

mies boasted that the itinerant must soon be exchanged for a stationary system. An attempt was made to cajole the regular dissenters, by professing a solicitude for their respectability, which was said to be injured by the intrusion of ignorant itinerants into the ministry. But only one dissenter, Mr. Belsham, of the unitarian creed, gave any public sanction to the proposed tampering with the liberty of preaching. Village preaching was the real object of attack, and neither Lord Sidmouth nor his ecclesiastical coadjutors, knew, or cared to distinguish between methodists, and those dissenters who pursued these evangelical labours. The spirit of opposition to them extended into Scotland, where Mr. Donald M'Arthur, pastor of a dissenting congregation in the island of Bute, was sent on board a ship of war, by a magistrate, who was, however, compelled by a court of law, "to pay him a hundred guineas as a solatium."

When the returns were made to the House of Lords, the dissenting places registered during the last fifty years were found to be about twelve thousand, and the preachers who had taken the oaths, four thousand. This increase was much less than was expected; but the returns were no criterion; for one congregation might have had occasion to register many places; while another might have risen into existence, or doubled its numbers, without making any entry in the courts; and many persons who began, did not continue to preach; while others, disapproving the law, refused to place themselves under its shield, till some imperative occasion arose. But Lord Sidmouth, on the 20th of June, 1810, commented on the increase of

dissenters, and affirming that he knew many of their own body disapproved of the indiscriminate licensing of preachers, gave notice that he should, early in the next session of parliament, make a motion on the subject. For he contended that the law had, during the last forty years, received a novel interpretation, by giving to any person, however ignorant or profligate, a right to preach, and thus to escape serving in the militia. Lord Holland observed, that nothing but a very strong case should induce government to interfere with that act, by which, not toleration, but justice was secured to dissenters. Earl Stanhope shrewdly asked, what were to be the criteria of a dissenting minister, and who were to be the judges of his qualifications.

The press was immediately employed to address warnings to Lord Sidmouth, and to arm the dissenters against the machinations of their foes; but the bill was brought into the House of Lords and debated, May 21, 1811. The dissenters had prepared for the conflict. A committee, which had been appointed by the general body of the three denominations, to watch the progress of the bill, published a string of resolutions agreed to at a meeting held, May 16, when it was determined to petition parliament against the proposed measures. The dissenting deputies, also, took similar steps, and the Wesleyan methodists joined a meeting of the friends of religious liberty, at the London Tavern, where a subscription was entered into, to guard the sacred rights of conscience. A sub-committee waited on the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to state their

sentiments, and engage the King's ministers to oppose the bill.

On the day appointed for the second reading, the lords were astonished at the torrent of petitions against the bill. Lord Erskine presented about two hundred and fifty, and other noblemen, such numbers, that they were piled in heaps, to the great obstruction of their lordships, the amusement and delight of the friends, and the mortification of the enemies of religious liberty. Earl Stanhope observed, that, if the measure were persisted in, the petitions against it, instead of being counted by thousands, would amount to millions. Lord Sidmouth, after inveighing against the kind of persons who became dissenting preachers, betrayed the real object of the bill, by saying, that, if things went on in their present course, we should have a nominal established church, and a sectarian people. To prevent this, he would have limited the protection of the law to ministers of separate congregations, in a way that would have been fatal to the methodist system, as well as to many of the operations of the various bodies of dissenters.

But the whole scheme was abortive; for Lord Liverpool, the Premier, said, that, though the motives of the author were pure, and the nature of the bill much mistaken, the alterations proposed were trifling, compared with the mischief it might create, in the present agitated state of the public mind. The archbishop of Canterbury followed in the same strain, and admitted that the flood of petitions should induce the house to stop short. Lord Sidmouth still pressed the second

reading of the bill; but Lord Erskine contended that it was a violation of the toleration, which the Lord Chancellor denied. Lord Holland condemned all legislation for religion, and even the toleration act as an imperfect measure. Earl Stanhope expressed the same opinion, and said that, on reading the statutes, with a professional man at his side, he had marked off three hundred laws on religion from the statute book; and that an act had passed in the reign of Edward VI. "which shovelled them all away." The noble lord gave notice, that he would, in the next session, introduce a bill on the equitable principle of leaving religion to itself. After Earl Grey had declared that the proposed bill was so objectionable that no modifications could reconcile him to it; it was ordered to be read that day six months.

Since the attacks on religious liberty by the last ministry of Queen Anne, which were defeated by her death, no measure had so much alarmed the Dissenters as Lord Sidmouth's bill, and nothing so powerfully promoted their interests. Their strength, their energy, and their means of concentrating their divided forces, were now demonstrated; for in forty-eight hours, six hundred petitions were brought up to the Lords, signed by a hundred thousand adult males. A lasting benefit was conferred on the nation and the church of God, by the proofs given of the existence and force of a public voice, which no government could venture to despise. For though the ministry concurred in rejecting the bill, and thus secured an easy triumph over it; there is reason to fear that they would have suffered it to pass, if the public had not been roused.

The dissenters returned thanks to the ministry, as well as to the opposition lords, who spoke nobly in behalf of the rights of conscience.

Lord Sidmouth, contrary to his intention, gave a death-blow to the long cherished machinations against religious liberty; for the confusion and consternation that overwhelmed his party, on this occasion, proved a beacon to all who inherited their spirit. The immediate consequence of the defeat of the obnoxious measure, was, on the one hand, the passing of what was called the New Toleration Act, which was a considerable improvement on that of William and Mary, and, on the other, the formation of the Protestant Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty. The reasons assigned for this new association of dissenters and liberal churchmen, were the construction recently put on the Toleration Act; the assumption by magistrates of judicial authority, where their power is only ministerial; the recent outrages committed against dissenting preachers and chapels; and the revival of the intolerant provisions of the Conventicle Act. Ninety pounds were recovered from persons in Wales, who were found at a prayer meeting; and in Berkshire three hundred pounds were expended in resisting the conviction of Mr. William Kent, of Childrey, in a penalty of twenty pounds, for praying at such a meeting. A persecution of this kind was raised at Wickham Market, in Suffolk, which cost the Dissenters about five hundred pounds. To meet these expenses, therefore, it was proposed to give to the new society the surplus of the funds raised to resist Lord Sidmouth's bill. The annual meetings of the society con-

tributed powerfully to promote the cause of religious liberty, for some liberal nobleman, or distinguished member of the House of Commons, presided, and there learned the claims of the Dissenters and the injustice inflicted on them, by the reports that were read in public and eloquently commented on by one of the secretaries, John Wilkes, Esq., the member of Parliament for Boston.

But, notwithstanding the prompt and vigorous interposition of the Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty, so frequent and violent were the attempts, in various parts of the country, to make the existing laws answer the end proposed by Lord Sidmouth's abortive measure, that the Dissenters applied to government for relief, and Lord Castlereagh, one of the secretaries of state, obtained leave, July 10th, 1812, to bring in a bill to restore things to the same state they were in before the late decisions of the quarter sessions. This, which has been called the new Toleration Act, repealed three acts of Charles II.; the first for preventing the mischief that may arise from persons refusing to take lawful oaths; the second for restraining Non-conformists from inhabiting corporations; and the last to suppress seditious conventicles. The new act, therefore, extended, as well as confirmed, religious liberty; for, instead of restricting its provisions to avowed Dissenters, it took Methodists, and even members of the establishment, under its shield, on their declaring themselves Christians and Protestants. The act of William and Mary allowed no more than five persons to meet in an unregistered place; but this improvement on it, permits twenty;

while it leaves ministers to defer taking the oaths of allegiance and supremacy till they are required by a magistrate; and defends congregations, not only from disturbances within the place of meeting, but also from annoyances without. This was a great triumph for our religious liberties, especially as it arose out of attempts to return to the days of intolerance. The manner in which the government co-operated in the advanced movement was highly creditable to a ministry that was not formed of the more liberal party in the state. But the temper of the government, at this time, may be seen by the address which the Archbishop of Canterbury and the clergy of his province presented to the Prince Regent, expressive of "the tenderest regard for those who differ from us in religion."

The extension of the state establishment of religion to our Colonies, and especially to India, may be regarded as a retrograde movement. The Rev. S. Claudius Buchanan, in 1813, submitted to the imperial parliament, "considerations on a colonial ecclesiastical establishment, with a view to the conversion of our Indian possessions to Christianity." He recommended the extension of our national church to all our colonies, and the appointment of a bishop at Bengal, Madras, and Bombay, with subordinate members of the hierarchy. About this time, the renewal of the charter of the East India Company engaged public attention, and the eloquent pen of the Rev. Robert Hall was employed to induce the nation to demand free access for missionaries into India. Hitherto the policy of the company was to discoun-

tenance missionaries, and it had power to send them out of the country; so that those who gained access went, not openly by a direct course, but by stealth, and in a circuitous route, and were always defenceless against the will of the colonial governors. Public meetings, therefore, were held and petitions were presented from all parts of the country, to obtain the insertion in the new charter of a clause to secure religious liberty in India. The petitions of nearly half a million of persons were powerfully supported, in the Commons, by Mr. Wilberforce, the philanthropic advocate of the negroes; and in the House of Peers, by various liberal noblemen; so that the clause which secures to missionaries the right to enter India, and pursue their benevolent labours there, was carried by a great majority, and the bill received the royal assent. This was a national triumph; for it rescued Britain from the guilt of closing the door of mercy against a hundred millions, over whom we have a direct, or indirect sway, in India. If, however, those who pleaded for an ecclesiastical establishment in that country, sought the spiritual welfare of its inhabitants, all who consider a state church to be an unscriptural and injurious device must naturally deplore its introduction into new domains, as still more indefensible than its continuance where deeply-rooted prejudices and complicated interests form its best apology. That it should have done mischief in India will surprise none who have watched the progress of human affairs; but it is painful to see the men who ventured first into the breach and stormed the citadel of idolatry, compelled to struggle against the domination of those who

came, in pomp and power, to reap the fruits of other men's victories. As the essence of a state church lies in the employment of human power, physical force, in religion, it would be absurd to expect that those who act upon that system should not sometimes exercise a dominion that is not founded in grace, or in reason. But the civil sceptre, armed with the sword, has, in India, as well as in Britain, defended Dissenting missionaries from the ecclesiastical crosier.

The peace of society was, about the year 1813, much disturbed by an attempt to assess dissenting chapels for the poor's rates, which was vigorously resisted by the minister of Surrey chapel, near London, who, though unwilling to be classed among Dissenters, fought their battles through a protracted and embittered struggle. In many instances, the Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty defeated those who attempted to tax the Dissenting places of worship; but, after various applications to the legislature, the requisite legal protection was obtained, which set the question at rest, in 1815, when school rooms for gratuitous instruction of the poor, as well as chapels, were exempted from all parochial rates.

Another step of advancement in the march of religious freedom was taken in 1818. The Toleration Act expressly provided "that nothing contained therein should give ease or benefit to any Papist, or any person that shall deny, in his preaching or writing, the doctrine of the blessed Trinity." The spirit of the times had, indeed, preserved those who denied the Trinity from actual persecution; but they lived upon

sufferance, and might, at any time, have been persecuted by a malicious or mistaken foe, and Mr. Fox had in vain employed his powerful eloquence to obtain for them, twenty years before, that protection which the act of William and Mary should have accorded to all. But Mr. William Smith, member of Parliament for Norwich, succeeded, at length, in obtaining an act intituled "An Act to repeal certain Acts and amend other Acts relating to Religious Worship and Assemblies, and Persons teaching or preaching therein." This repealed that exception which deprived Unitarians of the benefit of the Toleration Act—that part of the act against blasphemy and profaneness which applied to denying the doctrine of the Trinity—and two acts of the Scotch legislature which doomed Unitarians to death. The quietness with which these intolerant laws were blotted out of the statute book, was a gratifying proof of the advanced spirit of the age.

It is, however, painful to record that, even in the higher circles, a disposition to persecute was betrayed, where the law afforded no protection. Lord Romney informed against the Honourable Charles Noel, for celebrating worship at Barham Court, in Kent, though by the forms and the ministry of the establishment. The plea of ignorance could not procure exemption from the fine of forty pounds for two offences. Similar proofs of a disgraceful temper were given, at the close of the year 1816, when Mr. Hopkins, the Independent minister at Tisbury, Wilts, was disturbed in a riot raised by those who ought to have taught "peace on earth and good will among men." The Protestant Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty,

brought the cause before Mr. Justice Holroyd, who expressed to the jury his conviction that a riot had been proved, and they gave their verdict "guilty of a riot," against the perpetual curate who resided at Tisbury, the peace officer, and seven other persons. At the same assizes, held at Sarum, the same judge decided that a farmer had been illegally charged with the turnpike toll, when going to his ordinary place of worship, the Independent chapel at Devizes. It was pleaded, that, by going out of his own parish, the Dissenter lost the right of exemption from the toll; but the judge confirmed a previous sentence of Mr. Justice Grose, that such a plea was untenable.

The celebration, in 1818, of the centenary of the Reformation contributed eminently to interest the public mind in behalf of religious liberty; for the Reformation was an assertion of the right of private judgment, without which the Scriptures exist in vain. Two very opposite events, also, promoted the cause of religious freedom; the persecution of the evangelical party, by the Socinianised leaders in the church of Geneva; and the crusade of the Catholics against the Protestants in the department of the Gard, on the return of the Bourbons to the throne of France. The horror created by persecution is always favourable to freedom; as was manifest in the conduct of Queen Mary, which was fatal to Popery in England; and in the reaction created by the French persecutions.

The Dissenters were alarmed, in 1820, by the bill which Mr. Brougham brought into the House of Commons, to create a national system of education. To reward the clergy for communicating information, he pro-

posed to entrust them with the execution of his plan. Schools were to be established all over the country, and the schoolmasters were to be of the established church, of which they were to give proof, by having taken the sacrament within six months previously. This proposal of a new sacramental test filled the Dissenters with astonishment, and roused them to oppose the scheme, which, however, was postponed for six months, and finally dropped. The project of a system of national education was, indeed, revived by the same person, several years after, when he was ex-chancellor; but though he abandoned his exclusive clauses, he could never regain the confidence of the Dissenters, who had not seen any thing so unjust and intolerant as his first scheme, since the famous schism bill of the latter days of Queen Anne. It is remarkable that Mr. Brougham made no provision for the education of girls; though it must be manifest, to every reflecting mind, that the mental condition of this half of our race is of the highest importance to the improvement of the other. Hitherto, nothing has been done so liberally and wisely for national education, in which our country is disgracefully inferior to many others, as that which the Reform ministry effected, by obtaining parliamentary grants which are divided between the schools of the National—an exclusive society belonging to the establishment—and the British and Foreign schools, which are open to all. Wherever the half of the requisite funds for a school is provided by private benevolence, the government furnishes the other half.

To accomplish the object of Lord Sidmouth's bill,

in a less offensive way, a million was granted by Parliament for building new churches; for it was affirmed that Dissenters increased, in many places, for want of church room. This grant the Dissenters suffered to pass unnoticed; but as the duty on the building materials was remitted by government, the sum was really, though not apparently, much increased, and they contended that the same exemption from duty should be conceded to those who erected places of worship, without taxing the nation. This approach to even-handed justice has not, however, been made.

Another occurrence which interested the public, demands notice here; for though it belongs to the history of the established church, rather than to that of the Dissenters, it deeply affected the religious liberties of our country. Dr. Herbert Marsh, bishop of Peterborough, required all who applied to him for ordination, to answer eighty-seven questions, the drift of which may be known by their being called "Traps to catch Calvinists." This large addition to the Thirty-nine Articles, without the sanction of the authority by which *they* are imposed, was felt to be a great grievance by those who were refused ordination because they could not agree to the Pelagianism of the new questions. It was observed, that they entirely omitted all inquiry into personal piety, or ministerial qualifications, and were directed exclusively against the Calvinistic and evangelical tendency of the creed established by law. The university of Cambridge was called upon by some of the clergy, who wrote against this imposition, to remove the prelate from his

office of Margaret Professor of divinity; and the affair was severely noticed in Parliament; so that, as other bishops did not concur in this new attempt to coerce the consciences of the clergy, it was abandoned. The days of Laud were gone by, and religious liberty was triumphant beyond the established pale; or this serious attack on the evangelical party in the church would not have been so easily foiled.

The sympathies of the nation were, in 1824, roused most intensely by the sufferings and death of Mr. Smith, a missionary in Demerara. His zealous labours for the spiritual welfare of the slaves in that colony, had kindled the wrath of their cruel masters, who accused him falsely of fomenting rebellion, and threw him into prison, where he died. A letter which he wrote to the secretary of the Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty, was intercepted by the rulers of the colony; but the London Missionary Society, which had sent him out, having applied to the government at home, it gave prompt attention to the case; and Mr. Brougham, in the senate, so eloquently pleaded the cause of the martyr, that the painful event proved most advantageous to religious liberty, and the cause of missions. Demerara itself, afterwards, seemed ambitious of atoning for its fault, by an entire change of conduct; so that this colony has become a most favoured seat of missions, where the liberty of the Gospel has turned the curse of slavery into a blessing.

The attempt to relieve Unitarians from the necessity of recognising the Trinity, in the ceremony of marriage, though a failure, deserves notice here, on account of two attendant circumstances. The arch-

bishop of Canterbury voted for the bill, which was brought into the House of Lords; and the Lord Chancellor Eldon denied that the repeal of the penal statute of William and Mary against the oppugners of the Trinity, had given complete toleration to Unitarians, whom he affirmed to be still liable to punishment by the common law. That such a statement should have been made, unaccompanied by any expression of regret, affords a melancholy proof of the extent to which the technicalities of law may blind the mind to the claims of liberty and equity. Though the bill for the relief of the Unitarians obtained a second reading, it was thrown out, and Dr. Phillimore then abandoned a bill which he had introduced to the Commons for the relief of Catholics in England from the necessity of conformity to the established religion, in marriages and burials. As a precursor to a more general display of liberality, it should be recorded, that, in 1825, the Honourable Society of Gray's Inn abrogated one of their bye laws which, by requiring every candidate to produce a certificate of having taken the sacramental test, virtually excluded Dissenters from being called to the bar. But, on the 16th of November, 1825, a spontaneous order was issued by the Benchers, which placed the admission to the bar of students of that society on the same ground as in other inns of court.

The grand event of the nineteenth century was the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, which had, for more than two centuries, disgraced the statute book. For obtaining relief, efforts were made, in 1787, 1789, and 1790; and the last unsuccessful

attempt bears the date of 1823. The hour of success seems to have taken the Dissenters by surprise; but they were now assisted by the most pious and judicious friends of the established church, and by the Roman Catholics. A united committee was formed, in 1827, from the deputies; a committee of the three denominations; the board of congregational ministers; the united associate Presbytery of London; the Unitarian Association; and the Protestant Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty. A periodical publication, called the Test Act Reporter, was issued for this single object, and a very able statement of the case was published by the united committee. Other tracts also issued from the press, to enlighten the public mind, which was found to be very ignorant of the nature and effects of the obnoxious acts. For they were so far virtually repealed by the annual bill of indemnity that their intolerance, being neutralised, was concealed from the view of many, who would otherwise have raised their voices for the repeal. But even the lame device of an annual bill of indemnity, a disgrace to the legislation of our country, was perverted, in order to afford the relief which was made a plea for suffering the acts to remain on the statute book; for the indemnity was intended, not for conscientious Dissenters, but for careless churchmen, who had neglected to take the sacramental test, or for officers of the army and navy, who had been prevented, by their employments on foreign service.

When the Toleration Act was passed, the temper of the high church party, which gave William so much annoyance, prevented the government from availing

itself of the proper moment for the repeal of the intolerant statutes. The auspicious moment having, however, at last arrived, a meeting of the liberal members of Parliament, in Palace Yard, Westminster, unanimously recommended an immediate application to the legislature. Lord John Russell, whose family had always been the champions of religious liberty, was requested to take the lead, by moving for leave to bring in a bill to repeal the Test and Corporation Acts. To awaken the Dissenters, who had slumbered over the question, and to call forth petitions, the general body met at Dr. Williams' library, Dec. 11, 1827, and published a very able address, admirably calculated to produce the best effect, not only on Dissenters, but on the whole community.

Lord John Russell, on presenting petitions for the repeal, in the House of Commons, June, 1827, had made a very able speech, and observed, "I have voted for the removal of disabilities imposed by law on the Roman Catholics, who had been adherents to the house of Stuart; and I could not but do the same for the Protestant Dissenters, the zealous adherents of the house of Hanover. These laws are nothing but the dregs of the persecuting spirit of the sixteenth century. The test required tends to the profanation of one of the most sacred rites of our holy religion, and the Indemnity Act is nothing but an incomplete and insulting pardon for men who have committed no offence. The petitions are numerous almost beyond precedent, and many deserve peculiar consideration; for they are founded on the broad ground of the injustice and impolicy of all disabilities on account of religion. There

are many petitions from members of the church of England against these infringements on the rights of conscience, and I shall have to present petitions from Roman Catholics also."

The conduct of the corporation of the city of London contributed powerfully to the triumph of liberty and justice. A requisition being sent to the Lord Mayor, by about a hundred persons, a special court of common council was held, May 9, 1827, to consider the propriety of petitioning Parliament for the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts. Mr. Favell, a Dissenter, introduced the subject, and the court resolved, by a vast majority, that "the Corporation and Test Acts were passed in times, when almost all parties were opposed to the rights of conscience, and the principles of religious liberty." The first corporation in the empire, which had, in 1790, petitioned against the repeal, and thanked those representatives of the city who had voted against it, now nobly redeemed its character, by passing liberal resolutions, and presenting a petition full of just sentiments happily expressed.

But, while a civic corporation voted for wiping away the blot cast upon the Christian religion, by the profanation of the Lord's supper to secular purposes; Dr. Herbert Marsh, bishop of Peterborough, took the opposite course, in a charge delivered to his clergy, in July, 1826, which he published, under the title of the "Influence of the Roman Catholic question on the Established Church." He objected to Catholic emancipation, because the first and necessary consequence would be the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts;

observing that "it would be the height of injustice if the door were opened to those who act under the spiritual sway of a foreign potentate, and kept shut against such as submit to no other governors than such as are subjects of the British crown."

Though it was deemed prudent to withdraw the notice of motion for the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts in 1827, it was determined to renew it in the next session of parliament. The way was prepared by Mr. Favell's motion in the common council of the city of London, for petitioning parliament, agreeably to the resolutions of the preceding year. So strong was the tide in favour of the petition proposed, that only three hands were held up against it; the members of parliament who belonged to the court were desired to present it; and great hopes were expressed that other corporations would follow that of the metropolis. Petitions for the repeal of the intolerant act, were, indeed, poured into the Houses of Lords and Commons from all parts of the country, and not only did liberal members of the Established Church join in the effort, but Roman Catholics also, though they had been informed that the Dissenters would oppose Catholic emancipation, after obtaining their own.

Lord John Russell moved, in the House of Commons, Feb. 26, 1828, for leave to bring in a bill for the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts. His speech was full of that information which was much wanted; for many of the members of the legislature were strangely ignorant of the nature of the obnoxious acts, and of the position in which they placed the Dissenters. The noble mover showed, that it "was once

the custom for persons to be waiting in a neighbouring tavern, when some one belonging to the church came and called for the gentlemen who wished to qualify, for the sacrament was just about to be administered." He argued, that "those who opposed the repeal because they were apprehensive of danger to the Established Church, paid it an ill compliment, supposing it could not stand alone with just and equal laws, and observed, that, while no such tests exist in Scotland, the established church stands, as also, in Ireland, where the Protestant church is exposed to far greater danger." He concluded by saying, "the illustrious person (the Duke of Wellington) now at the head of his majesty's counsels, the conqueror at Waterloo, that great personage, entitled as he is to the gratitude of the country, standing in the singular position that he does, commanding the patronage of the church, and the patronage of the state, having an army of a hundred thousand men attached to him, from long service and command, I had almost said, having at his disposal, the power of the sovereign, even he, great as is his power, and extensive as is his patronage, must modify his opinions, and fashion his actions to the age in which he lives. He must look to the signs of the times, and if so, he must see the necessity of granting these rights, which the Protestant Dissenters have demanded, which may be retarded, but cannot long be withheld."

The motion for a committee of the whole house to consider of the repeal was seconded by Mr. John Smith, who, commenting on the ignorance that prevailed in the house, shewed to what absurd lengths the test act went, obliging even serjeants and corporals in the

army, and pedlars, who hawked goods through the country, to take the sacrament, as a qualification; and imposing penalties so severe as to ruin a man, rendering him incapable of receiving a legacy. "Would it not be more merciful (he exclaimed), to throw a man into the Thames at once?" He related several anecdotes that showed how ignorant of the acts were many of the very persons who were specially intended to be controlled by them.

Sir Robert Inglis, was the first who spoke on the opposite side, and he contended that the acts in question were necessary for the protection of the Established Church; while Mr. Secretary Huskisson, opposed the repeal, because he thought it would be injurious to the object he wished to accomplish, the emancipation of the Roman Catholics.

Mr. Peel, the chancellor of the exchequer, having been called up by some remarks of Lord Milton, professed the greatest respect for the Dissenters, and wished he had not been compelled to vote on the present occasion; because he was not like those in the opposition, who have none to consult but themselves. He opposed the repeal of the acts, which, he said, produced little practical injury to the Dissenters; and as there was a very good feeling between them and Churchmen, this should not be disturbed by any change in the law. When the house divided, the ministers were confounded to find that there were,

Ayes	237
Noes	193
Majority for going into the committee .	44

On Thursday, February 28th, Lord John Russell moved the order of the day for going into the committee, and Mr. Spring Rice was called to the chair. The mover expressed the highest satisfaction at the tone of conciliation which had characterised the debate; but Mr. Peel owned the surprise and disappointment he felt at the majority with which the measure had been carried; while some who had voted with Lord John Russell, began to talk of a suspension, rather than a repeal, and Mr. Peel asked for a few days' delay.

"Lord VISCOUNT MILTON. Mr. Spring Rice;—if honourable gentlemen who now, all at once, evince so ardent a disposition to conciliate and promote the wishes of the majority of this house, asked for delay for the purpose of devising a *bonâ fide* remedy for the grievances under which the Protestant Dissenters of England have so long laboured, I would advise my noble friend to grant them that delay. But, Sir, as I am convinced that these Gentlemen have no such object, I beg my noble friend will not remit his exertions in carrying this measure through the house, by an unseasonable delay of three or four days. For, upon what ground does the Honourable Baronet (Sir Edward Knatchbull) who spoke last, and the Member for the University of Oxford (Mr. Estcourt) ask for delay? Because, forsooth, they are taken by surprise—that they did not expect the decision of the house—that they were disappointed on that occasion—that they were not prepared for the alternative of a total repeal of the acts, or a total defeat of my noble friend's proposition. I ask, why are they taken by

surprise? How can they be unprepared for that alternative? For, what were the terms of the notice of the motion given by my noble friend, now standing upon the books of the house, and since the opening of the session? Here they are, in the book in my hands; for a 'Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts.' What then becomes of the objections of the honourable gentlemen to our proceeding at once? Away, therefore, with these idle, false pretences, which those who advance them must know to be false pretences. I know, that their only object in making them is to endeavour, some way or other, to regain the vantage ground which they lost by the majority of the other night; and, by delay, to defeat the Protestant Dissenters, and not only them, but, I will say also, to defeat the best interests of the church, of which they profess themselves to be the most zealous supporters.

"Mr. Secretary Peel. Sir, I moved for a short delay, for the purpose of giving this subject fuller consideration; that proposition has been met in a spirit—in a spirit so totally different from that which, I declare on my honour, I made it in; the noble lord has thrown out imputations so utterly foreign to me, that I do demand—why was not the proposal I made met in the same spirit of conciliation with which every one must agree that the motion of last Tuesday was met? When I say that delay would be beneficial to the question, I do not ask for delay with any other object: I do not propose suspension or delay for any sinister purpose. I should have been happy to have undertaken a co-operation with the noble lord in his views, but now let him take his own course;—let him

move his resolution.—I shall propose no suspension —I shall accept of no delay ;—I shall give no vote upon the subject;—but I shall reserve to myself full liberty, at any future period, to meet the subject in any way I think proper."

During an angry discussion, Mr. Peel left the house, as it was thought, in a passion. But he returned, and endeavoured to remove the impression he had created. The debate, after this, turned on the introduction of a declaration into the proposed bill of repeal, to answer the end of a test, by compelling all to declare that they would not use any office to which they might be called, to the injury of the Church of England. Lord John Russell and his friends pleaded for the unconditional repeal ; but Mr. Sturges Bourne proposed a declaration to be taken by all, whether dissenters or churchmen, on entering office, and Mr. William Smith, as a dis senter, ceded the point.

Lord Holland introduced the bill in the House of Peers, by saying, "My Lords, I rise to move the first reading of a bill just brought up from the House of Commons, for repealing so much of several acts as imposes the necessity for receiving the sacrament of the Lord's supper, as a qualification for certain offices." He then expressed his satisfaction at the success of the measure, and at the conciliatory conduct of the Church of England, its clergy and bishops. On the 17th of April, his lordship observed, "Here is a bill, which after gliding through all the perilous passes, which were so fatal to its predecessors, has arrived where, until this day, not a breath of adverse wind has blown upon it." It would be difficult to do justice to the

wisdom and eloquence of his lordship's speech, but it would be going too far to ascribe to it that which followed; for the Archbishop of York, after apologising for the absence of the Archbishop of Canterbury, who was indisposed, declared that he felt himself obliged to vote for the repeal of those acts which had given rise, in too many instances, to the profanation of the most sacred rites of our religion. Other prelates followed in the same strain; but the ex-chancellor, Eldon, declared, that the proposed bill was calculated to destroy a great principle in our constitution.

The premier, the Duke of Wellington, observed, that the government had opposed the bill, on its introduction into the other house, but when it had received the sanction of a decided majority, he had thought it wise to yield. Viscount Goderich delivered a very convincing speech, which contained the following passage:

"My Lords, it is probable I may speak on this subject from feelings in which few of your Lordships can share; for it has been my lot to hold various offices, and I have also taken the sacrament on various occasions; but I was only called on to qualify for one office, and that was the Chancellorship of the Exchequer. Why this was the case I really do not know, except it be that, perhaps, the Chancellorship of the Exchequer is a peculiarly dangerous office—why it is so dangerous I cannot tell. Be that as it may, however, soon after my nomination I was told it was absolutely necessary that I should, upon a certain Sunday, in a certain church, qualify myself for retaining office by taking the sacrament. God knows I had not the

smallest objection to do that: I was accustomed to do so; but it did so happen that I had received it shortly before my appointment, though not with a view to qualify myself for the enjoyment of any temporal office; and I naturally said to my informant, 'Won't that do?' But the answer was, 'Oh! no, not at all, by no means.' Well, I complied, and to the church, on the day intimated, I proceeded, for the purpose of receiving the sacrament; and I will say it was to me one of the most painful duties I had ever been called upon to perform, considering its object, and combining, as it did, two duties, of the combination of which I could not approve."

The Bishop of Chester made a long and able and candid speech, in favour of the bill, answering Lord Eldon, who had uttered his fears for the christian character of the country, by showing that this did not depend on the Test and Corporation Acts, but was prior to them, and would remain when they should be abolished. The prelate contended that the sacramental test was a grievous burden to the consciences of the clergy, who were obliged by it to admit to the supper of the Lord, persons who came to qualify for office, but were of such a character as would have justified the minister in refusing to admit them. He proved by numerous facts that the security they afforded to the church was perfectly nugatory, and that equal security, at least, would be furnished by the proposed bill. But he took this opportunity of denouncing the London University, for proposing to banish religion from education.

Lord Mansfield opposed the bill, in a speech which

seemed designed to tarnish the honour of the great name he bore. He commented, in a severe manner, on some of the petitions in favour of the bill, especially on those from "the Roman Catholics, who prayed that their suffering brethren might be released from oppression, at the same time that, by the acknowledged doctrine of the church to which these petitioners belonged, the persons for whom they petitioned are condemned to eternal destruction. This," he contended, "proved that their motive was to destroy, on some pretence or other, the test, that they might themselves be able to take office."

When the Chancellor put the question, that the bill be now read a second time, he declared that the contents had it.

The Earl of WINCHELSEA then said, "My Lords, I hold in my hand a clause which I shall certainly propose to be added to the bill when it is in committee. By this clause, the relief sought to be afforded to the Dissenters will not be abridged; and the clause contains a declaration of Christianity to which I cannot conceive there will be any objection on the part of any Christian sect. With your Lordships' leave, I will read the clause which I wish to introduce into the bill.

"'And whereas, many religious and conscientious persons having objected to the necessity of taking the sacrament of the Lord's supper for the purposes aforesaid, as tending to an irreverent use of the same; and whereas, experience for many years past having proved that many Protestant Dissenters from the Church of England and Ireland may be admitted to

offices in corporations, and to offices of trust under the crown, without injury to the constitution in Church and State, it is expedient that some other provision be substituted in lieu of the said sacramental test.

"'And whereas, by the laws of this realm, constituting and confirming for ever the treaties of union between England and Ireland, it is solemnly enacted and declared that the churches of England and Ireland, as by law established, be united into one protestant and episcopal church, to be called the united church of England and Ireland; and that the doctrine, worship, and government of the said united church shall be, and shall remain, in full force for ever, as the same are now by law established for the Church of England; and that the continuance and preservation of the said united church, as the Established Church of England and Ireland, shall be deemed and taken to be an essential and fundamental part of the said union; and that, in like manner, the doctrine, worship, and government of the Church of Scotland shall remain and be preserved as the same are now by law established by the acts for the union of the two kingdoms of England and Scotland;

"'And whereas, it is just and fitting that all persons now required by law to take the sacramental test aforesaid, should, on being excused therefrom, be required to give some other sufficient assurance of their being well-disposed to the continuance and preservation of the said united church;

"'Be it therefore enacted, that so much and such parts of the said several acts, passed in the 13th and 25th years of the reign of King George the Second, as

require, &c., be repealed. And be it further enacted, that in lieu of being required to take or receive the said sacrament, as aforesaid, all persons who are at present by law required to take the said sacrament, &c., either as a qualification for being admissible to any corporation, or to any office of trust, or as a condition subsequent to being admitted to any such corporation, &c., shall, except as hereafter excepted, immediately before their admission to such corporation, &c., make and subscribe the declaration following :—

"'I, A. B., being about to be admitted to (as the case may be), do solemnly declare in the presence of Almighty God, and of his Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ, that I do firmly hold and believe that the canonical books of the Old and New Testament, as they are set forth by authority within this realm, are true, and do contain the true revealed word of Almighty God ; and I do promise and swear that I will do nothing to injure or weaken the united church of England and Ireland, as by law established, or to bring into contempt the doctrine, discipline, and government thereof.—So help me God.'

"'And whereas, there are several offices of trust under the crown, of too little power or influence to make it necessary to require the said declaration from persons admitted to the same ;

"'Be it therefore enacted, that his majesty in council shall be enabled to enumerate and publish, by order of council, a list of such inferior officers as his said majesty in council shall deem not to require the said declaration to be made as a qualification for admission to the same. Provided always, and be it further

enacted, that nothing herein contained shall be construed so as to empower his majesty, as aforesaid, to excuse from taking the said declaration any person about to be admitted to be a member of his majesty's most honourable privy council, or any person appointed and named to be judge in any of his majesty's courts of king's bench, common pleas, or exchequer, or judge of any court of record within this realm, or to be justice of the peace in any county of the same, or to hold any office of state under his majesty, his heirs, and successors.

"'And whereas, there is an ancient and laudable custom, that the judges of assize, on their several circuits in England and Wales, do solemnly attend divine service, according to the rites of the Church of England, in the cathedral or other principal church of the city or town wherein the said assize is holden;

"'Be it declared, that it shall be part of the duty of the said judges of assize to attend divine service according to the rites of the Church of England as aforesaid, unless prevented by illness or other unavoidable impediment.'"

This amendment, which was afterwards modified, shows the spirit of the opposing party; but by a considerable majority it was negatived. On going into the committee, the Earl of Roseberry showed, that the Test and Corporation Acts were a great grievance to the Scotch established church. Lord Eldon replied at considerable length; and, though answered by Lord Holland, declared, that if every man in the house voted for the bill, he would go below the bar and vote against it.

In discussing the declaration to be substituted for the test, a curious scene of recrimination occurred. The Bishop of Chester, commenting on Lord Eldon's proposal, to have those who approved the sacramental test to continue to take it, said, "The earl defended the sacramental test, as a means of excluding dissenters, and then proposed that, as many dissenters, as well as churchmen, took this test, they should be allowed to continue to do so. I should like to know how the noble and learned lord can reconcile principles so different." Lord Eldon answered, "the right reverend prelate would be better employed in attending to his own consistency of conduct, than in talking about that of others." The bishop replied to a prophecy of Lord Eldon, that Chester would be exchanged for Canterbury, "I would advise the noble and learned lord, hereafter, to found his reasonings on something more tangible and more to the purpose than his present hypothesis. Such a course will be more consistent with his duty, and tend more effectually to attain the object of his argument." The Earl of Eldon then requested the right reverend prelate would abstain from giving his advice, where he was not asked for it; saying, "I am sure I am not likely to follow his admonitions, at least in the present instance."

Almost the whole time of the house was devoted to the declaration that was to be substituted for the sacramental test, and great care was taken by the Duke of Wellington to suffer nothing to pass which would prejudice the cause of the Roman Catholics. When Lord Roden expressed his regret that more care seemed to be taken of the temporalities of the church

than of its religion, one of the Bishops made a declaration that should be put on record.

"The Bishop of LINCOLN. I wish, my Lords, to say a few words upon what has fallen from the noble earl who has just spoken. I believe that in what that noble earl has uttered, concerning the support given by the bench of bishops to the declaration proposed to be introduced into the present bill, he has fallen into a serious mistake, since, in declaring his opinion upon the insufficiency of that declaration, he has asserted that the bishops have shown a greater regard for the temporalities than for the spiritualities of the church. If the proposition submitted by the noble baron, with respect to the declaration, had been to alter the liturgy of the church in conformity with the opinions of the Dissenters, to expunge from its articles some part of the substance of its creed, or to change its doctrines or its discipline; if these, or any of these, had been the objects of the proposal, there would have been some ground for the assertion, that the clergy in this house had neglected the spiritual doctrines of the church. But what is the question before the house? It is, whether a portion of the two acts of parliament, whereby persons dissenting from the doctrines of the Church of England are excluded from holding corporate offices, shall be repealed. That, and that only, is the question before the house. Now, what conceivable connexion there is between that proposition and the spiritual doctrines of the Church of England, I confess I cannot see; and I am surprised that the noble lord should have fallen into the error of conceiving that there is any. The facts and arguments

advanced by the noble earl could only have arisen from a mistake of the nature of the proposition before the house, or from a confusion of two things perfectly distinct in their existence—namely, the temporalities of the church, and its spiritual character. I will tell your lordships that these two things are not connected together, and that one of these may be destroyed without the principle of the other being affected. The church may be separated from the state—its ministers may be ejected from their benefices—its revenues may be transferred to the support of other denominations, or diverted to secular purposes—but still it will continue to exist as a religious community; its believers will meet, like the primitive churches of Christianity, for the purpose of performing the act of worship according to its creed; and they will perform it in a decent form, and with great scrupulousness as to its rites, although they may be deprived of their places of worship. It may be stripped of its worldly wealth, but it will remain rich in spiritual blessings. Such charges as those made by the noble earl against the members of this bench can only proceed from a confusion of the two things to which I have already referred, and which, I am fully convinced, are in their nature extremely different. The charge, however, is one of so grave a nature, that, though founded in mistake, I could not but feel that I was called on immediately to deny it."

The bill passed by a great majority, and received the royal assent.

The Dissenters expended about three thousand pounds in conducting this affair to a successful issue.

One thousand was contributed by the Protestant Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty, and the other two by the deputies. Thanks were tendered by the united committee, not only to the mover and seconder of the bill, in both houses of parliament; but also to the Premier, and Chancellor of the Exchequer, as well as to some of the bishops, and to distinguished advocates of the measure in the lower and upper house. It was proposed, in order to commemorate the event, to erect a building for the public meetings of Dissenters; but nothing was done beyond a public dinner at Freemasons' Tavern, where the Duke of Sussex presided. He was supported by a very large number of the most distinguished members of both houses of parliament. Owing to the illustrious chairman, and the noble and honourable guests, the meeting was brilliant beyond all example. There were upwards of 130 stewards, consisting of dissenting gentlemen from all parts of the kingdom. To the managing stewards the decorum and comfort of the day are in a great measure to be ascribed. There were 400 gentlemen present, the utmost number that could be pleasantly accommodated, and 100 ladies graced the galleries with their presence.

"The united committee appointed a deputation to wait upon His Royal Highness the Duke of Sussex, with cordial acknowledgments of his most valuable services on this ever-memorable day; and they also passed a unanimous vote of thanks to the stewards for their zeal and liberality, and their judicious arrangement of the festival."

That the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts,

as far as they affected dissenters, was a grand event, may be seen by the struggles of opponents, as well as by the exultations of friends. The nation was rescued from a most unprecedented profanation of the rites of religion, and the concurrence of churchmen with dissenters in accomplishing this object, afforded a gratifying proof of the increased sense of religion, before which the horrid practice of desecrating the memorial of the Saviour's death, to answer political purposes, could not stand. Those who regarded the Lord's supper as a divine institution, and yet stood aloof on this occasion, are not to be envied; and while we honour those churchmen who joined the dissenters in seeking the repeal, we cannot but think that the application should have come from them. By the obnoxious acts the Dissenters were politically degraded; but the church of England was spiritually prostituted. If the same necessity had been laid upon dissenting churches and ministers, as was imposed on the established clergy by the Test Act, the jails would have been filled with those who would have suffered any thing rather than profane the supper of the Lord. While, therefore, we cannot but sympathise with those prelates who said that the Test Act was a grievance to their conscience, we can scarcely avoid saying, "Why, then, did not you take the lead in seeking the repeal?"

To those whose wisdom and energy obtained the relief so long needed, the success of the measure was the more gratifying, as it was a good omen of the final triumph of the principle, that no difference of religious sentiments should affect any man's civil rights. To

Dissenters the new bill gave relief from a degrading necessity to conform to a church they disapproved, in order to enjoy their full rights as citizens. Those of them who had been accustomed to practise what was called occasional conformity, by taking the sacrament in the establishment, as a qualification for office, must have felt, as Lord Goderich declared he did, on a similar occasion. Others, indeed, took office, and neglected the test, along with thousands of churchmen; but these were always exposed to unpleasant consequences, which made the great majority of Dissenters abstain from entering corporations, and taking offices under government.

By the temper with which the repeal was carried its value was greatly enhanced. Those ebullitions of wrath which occurred, both in the House of Commons, and in that of Lords, were not against Dissenters, who were, on their part, very temperate in their petitions, and were, in their turn, treated candidly, even by opponents. But churchmen said hard things of churchmen; bishops of lawyers, and civilians of ecclesiastics. It is observable, however, that bishops never appeared to greater advantage than on this occasion; for even those who opposed the bill spoke with as much moderation as could be expected, while the episcopal advocates for the repeal uttered more just sentiments than had been heard from their bench for ages. For this, they were charged by the opposite party with betraying, not only their own church, but the christian religion. The absence of anything like general petitioning against the measure, or any attempt to get up the cry, that the church was in danger, may be

ascribed to this improved temper of the heads of the church.

The Dissenters received the boon with a correspondent spirit. Far from exulting, they gave the due meed of praise to churchmen for their co-operation, and held no exclusive festival to celebrate the triumph. By inviting a professed churchman, and a member of the royal family, to preside, they gave a pledge of the catholicity of the spirit which led to the public dinner on the joyous occasion.

The success of the measure may be ascribed to various causes. There was a general concurrence of all parties among Dissenters; their measures were well taken, and their language was temperate; they took great pains to inform their representatives and engage their votes; the noble movers, Lord John Russell in the Commons, and Lord Holland in the Peers, poured much light on the subject, so as to win the assent of many who were previously ill-informed; and by great amenity and candour, subdued the hostility of those who had been ill disposed. The decided majority gained, at first, in the Commons, took the ministers by surprise, and carried the more weight for being composed of men of all parties. The irritation felt, or feigned, in consequence of Lord Milton's remarks, which drove Mr. Peel out of the house, led to consultation with the more politic premier, who determined on a concession which he deemed favourable to his ulterior views. For it cannot be doubted, that the determination of government to grant Catholic emancipation, induced it to seize this opportunity of

affording relief to the Dissenters, as a preparatory measure.

The improved temper of the Commons proclaimed the progress of liberal opinions, as well as a growing conviction of the number and importance of Dissenters. Lord Sidmouth had, indeed, opened the eyes of the legislature to some important facts, and when the hope of suppressing or restricting dissent was abandoned, many came to the conclusion, that it was necessary to improve the whole policy of the country, with regard to religious freedom.

Since their last vigorous effort for the Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, Dissenters had devoted themselves with so much ardour to the diffusion of knowledge and religion, that, while their own numbers had increased, the national mind was improved, and their indirect influence, where not very perceptible, had become great. The Established Church had felt the necessity of improvement. Those clergymen that were a scandal to their profession were becoming more rare; while the evangelical clergy had not only increased, but some of them had found their way to the episcopal bench. This party was, indeed, accused of increasing the numbers of Dissenters, with whom an agreement in doctrine and spirit was obvious; but it was still found that none but evangelical preachers could rival the Dissenters in attracting congregations. By the united influence of both, therefore, the public mind was so much improved, that the profanation of the Lord's supper to political purposes found few advocates and many censors.

The relief obtained by the Dissenters was, however,

far from being as perfect as was at first expected. The advocates of bigotry and intolerance left their marks on the bill, in the declaration that was to be taken, instead of the sacramental test. As applied to Dissenters, it looks suspicious; but as it must be taken by Churchmen too, it is ridiculous. The whole world can scarcely exhibit any thing so preposterous as compelling a man, on entering upon office, to declare that he will not injure his own church. That this declaration is useless was admitted by those who defended, as readily as it was urged by those who opposed, it. One of the Tory lords, pleading for the words, "on the true faith of a Christian," owned that the expression might be adopted by a Jew, and that he could use it if he were a Jew. A Dissenter urged upon his representative in Parliament the propriety of calling upon the other party to declare that they would not, on taking office, do any thing to injure the Dissenters; but the senator replied, "It is true, that public men ought to be as much bound not to injure religious liberty, as not to injure the Church of England; but we had better not endanger the bill, by any such proposal; for the declaration is only designed to let a certain party down gently."* Still the declaration is liable to many of the objections that were urged against the Test. Delicate consciences are most embarrassed by such provisions. The bishops were so treated in the debate on this bill, that a reflecting man might deeply feel the injury done to the Church of England, by seating her principal clergy there; but if it be said, that the declaration should be

* For the Bill, see Appendix.

taken in the sense of those who impose it, then a delicate conscience would ask, "Must I consent to what I know will injure the Church of England, because she thinks it for her benefit?" The immediate practical effect of the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts was not considerable. Few Dissenters were, in consequence of the change of the law, admitted into corporations, or appointed to offices under government. The corporations, being self-elected, were in most places actuated by an exclusive spirit, and where they were more liberal, Dissenters had previously been admitted, forming in some places the majority, and never having been called to submit to the test. They were not, however, in general ambitious of office, or of civic powers; for their religious principles and habits made them shun associations which they saw operating most injuriously on the character of their neighbours. Those Dissenters who were most zealous in seeking the repeal of the disabilities were, in many instances, least inclined to make any use of the new bill for their own admission to place or power.

But the subsequent municipal reform was the most efficient practical repeal of the Corporation Act. For the election to civic offices, being now thrown open to all householders of a certain rent, Dissenters were chosen in great numbers, to mayoralties, as well as other posts of honour, in cities and towns. In some instances, all the old corporation was thrown out, and a majority of Dissenters chosen; for the towns had long groaned under an exclusive party, which had employed its influence for the aggrandizement of its members, and the embezzlement of the corporate

property; so that when the election was open and free, such citizens were chosen as had had no share in these malversations. As the exclusive corporations had been in most instances composed of high churchmen who had used their influence to suppress Dissent, the cause of religious liberty was eminently advanced by this municipal reform, which was scarcely inferior in importance and influence to parliamentary reform, the grand leading event of this age, which has not been mentioned here, because it was purely a political affair.

The mention of the London University by the Bishop of Chester, in the debate on the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, leads to the consideration of another occurrence which has an important bearing on religious liberty. Oxford and Cambridge have for ages been so exclusive, that Dissenters have been shut out from the literary advantages which should be open to all, and the Dissenting youth, of the richer families, had been compelled either to go to the Scotch and continental universities, or to study at Cambridge, without hope of obtaining the honorary rewards of learning. This more liberal university did not, like Oxford, impose subscription to the articles of the Established Church, at the very entrance, but it required subscription previously to the taking of degrees. Dissenters, therefore, often projected schemes for relieving themselves of the literary disadvantages under which they laboured. The venerable Dr. Bogue drew up, and circulated among friends, a plan for the formation of a Dissenting University, to impart the knowledge of languages and science to all, without

distinction, leaving theology, and the studies peculiar to those who are destined to the ministry, to the institutions which already exist for these objects. Whether this movement, which was not very generally known, led to the formation of the London University, it may not be easy to determine; but certainly Dr. Bogue's proposal was prior in point of time; and that which was eventually adopted followed soon after. This was a decided improvement; for having no peculiar connexion with Dissenters, and being on a grander scale, the London University was calculated to be a greater blessing to the nation.

The first stone of the buildings for the new institution was laid by the Duke of Sussex, April 30, 1827. The corporation consisted of the shareholders, among whom there were many Dissenters of various denominations; and as it was designed to afford the advantages of a liberal education to all, not excluding Jews, or heathens; it was necessary to leave religion to be taught by those to whom the parents of the students might entrust this important charge. For, as no lodgings are provided in the institution, the youths are supposed to be under the domestic care of their parents or guardians, to whom a constant account is rendered by the professors of the attendance and conduct of each class. The independent efforts that have been made to supply religious instruction in the vicinity, but beyond the jurisdiction of the university, have not, it is believed, succeeded. As might have been expected, a violent clamour was raised against an attempt to counteract the exclusive bigotry of Oxford and Cambridge. London was denounced as an

unfit site for a university; though there is scarcely a metropolis in Europe without such an institution; but the insincerity of this objection was quickly demonstrated; for the same party which raised it, formed a rival institution, called King's College, in a far more objectionable part of London; and they who affirmed that there was no need for one university in addition to those of Oxford and Cambridge, formed what may be called a second. But the grand objection made to the London University was, the exclusion of religion from the course of instruction; and this was to be remedied in the rival college by introducing the same exclusive system which made it necessary to provide a university for those who could not submit to the tests of Oxford and Cambridge. As usual, however, the illiberal party in the country has been driven by the efforts of Dissenters, and their friends, to extend the benefits of education, and while knowledge gains, liberty will not lose by the strife.

It was always expected that a royal charter would be given to the London University, to enable it to grant degrees in arts, which would be nationally recognised; and this was actually drawn up, and waited only for the great seal; but the formation of King's College created a difficulty; for as it was desirable to grant the same privileges to both institutions, the government determined to form a kind of senate, to which the title of the London University should be transferred, along with the power to grant degrees in arts. University College is, therefore, now the appellation of that which was at first called the London University, and which shares with King's

College in the benefits to be derived from a university, with a royal charter to grant degrees. The dissenter, and the prelate of the establishment, sit, together with the physician and the man of science, in the senate, which is constituted a university; and several of the professors of University College are Dissenting ministers; so that religious liberty has obtained an important conquest over the high church bigotry, which would have monopolized the honours and benefits of literature and science.

But while the Dissenters have thus obtained some practical relief from an ancient grievance, and their sons derive the advantage of the new institution, degrees have not been conferred; for, by some strange interference, the liberal intentions of the government have hitherto been thwarted, an attempt having been made to introduce a religious test, under a mask. Even the complete success of this liberal college would not, however, furnish the Dissenters with a valid reason for abandoning all thoughts of obtaining free access to the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, which, as national institutions, ought to be open to the whole nation. The Earl of Radnor has distinguished himself by his zeal for the accomplishment of this object, which is favoured by some of the members of the universities, but, hitherto successfully opposed by the majority, who have displayed an intolerant spirit towards their more liberal compeers. Dr. Hampden, the Regius Professor of Divinity, at Oxford, has been made the object of a most vexatious persecution, ostensibly for heterodoxy, but really for his liberality towards Dissenters. While the contest is raging, and

the right of the sovereign and parliament to interfere with the colleges is denied, there is an obvious remedy; for the Regius Professors may be multiplied, made efficient, bound to admit all comers without tests, and endued, as a corporation, with power to grant degrees.

A great national measure, which did not particularly affect Dissenters, demands notice in a chapter on the history of religious liberty. The Duke of Wellington, to the great surprise of many, introduced and carried in the Lords, as well as the Commons, the long contested measure of Catholic emancipation. The bill received the royal assent, April 13, 1829. Seats in both houses of parliament were thus opened to Catholics, and every thing was done to make the grace complete. But nothing could exceed the mortification of the high church party, whose advocate, Lord Eldon, shed tears; nor were there wanting Dissenters who were inconsistent enough to deplore this act of justice, though the great majority abundantly repaid the liberality of the Catholics, who had petitioned for the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts. The general body of the three denominations determined to petition for the entire removal of all civil disabilities on account of religion. From this time, it was said by some in a desponding tone, the constitution was sacrificed, and our government ceased to be Protestant; nor has this party failed to make some late and feeble attempts to petition for the repeal of the bill of emancipation. To the genuine Protestant, however, it was highly gratifying to reflect, that our government having now set at rest this question which had long agitated the kingdom, completed the triumph which religious liberty

obtained by the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts.

The Reform of the Irish church had an important bearing on religious liberty and dissent; for it exhibited that entire dominion of the state over the church, which the latter has affected to deny, and which forms one grand reason for dissent. When a number of bishopricks were extinguished at a stroke, who could deny that they were the creatures of the state? or that the power which annihilated many might do the same to all? This sweeping measure demonstrated, too, that a state church cannot stand against a preponderancy of Dissenters; for it is now generally admitted that what is left of the Irish Protestant establishment must undergo new changes, while parties are divided between two projects, the one for completing the adulterous connexion by giving to the state two wives, at once paying both Protestants and Catholics; and the other for submitting to that, which must be at last triumphant, the voluntary principle.

Church reform in England, also, became the all-absorbing theme, not by the efforts of Dissenters, but by the conviction forced upon reflecting churchmen, that, after the changes that had taken place, in the administration of affairs, it would be impossible for the Church of England to stand without reform. Dissenters being now disposed to press their great principle, the duty of government to confine its attention to civil affairs, and leave religion to the management of voluntary churches, turned off their attention from minor objections against the Church of England; but these

were exposed by the clergy themselves, with a boldness that astonished Dissenters, and justified all that they had been accustomed to say. Publications on church reform by churchmen, both of the laity and clergy, in quick succession, roused the public attention, and one by Lord Henley, and another by Mr. Cox, perpetual curate of Stonehouse, laid naked the faults of the establishment, with an unsparing hand. A large part of the clergy of Durham petitioned for church reform.

After the passing of the bill for parliamentary reform, much was said of the intention of the ministry to reform the church; but it soon became manifest, that they had either formed inadequate notions of that work, or found themselves encompassed with difficulties which they were unwilling, or unable to overcome. The boasted, or threatened, church reform, therefore, proved a mockery; and many of the clergy, convinced that deliverance from the evils which wounded their conscience, would not come from government, quitted the establishment, a few of them joining the older bodies of Dissenters, and others swelling the ranks of the Plymouth brethren.

It was happy for these new Non-conformists that they rose under the shade of those who had made it safe to dissent from the Established Church. For, in consequence of the spirit of liberty created by the labours and sufferings of the puritans and their successors, no persecution was raised against the new secession, though it formed a body of ultra-dissenters hostile to state churches and even to the christian ministry, in the eagerness of a zeal to destroy the popish

distinction of clergy and laity. The prelates seemed to take no notice of these deserters, though some of them were men of distinction; but the Bishop of Salisbury informed one Dissenting clergyman that he could not withdraw himself from the episcopal authority under which he had been placed at his ordination. As the temper of the times did not admit of enforcing spiritual authority by temporal power, the offender despised the empty threat.

The ecclesiastical courts, however, those relics of papal power, which ought not to have survived the Reformation, now attracted the attention both of friends and foes. The Dissenters complained of being exposed to expensive suits in these judicatories, which are the scorn of our courts of law; and some hopes were held out that the jurisdiction of the priests would be either abolished, or restricted in its operation to those who belonged to the church of which these courts formed a part. But, while the nation waited in vain for this change, the members of the establishment began to feel that what was so unjust an annoyance to those without, was as ineffectual to secure discipline within, their own pale. The bishops had, indeed, obtained absolute dominion over the defenceless curates; but the beneficed clergy had retained some independence, though of a pernicious kind; for some men of scandalous character set their diocesans at defiance, being able to ruin them by expensive delays. A commission was, therefore, appointed to seek for a remedy, and a bill was prepared, but not carried. When a second attempt was made, in 1838, a curious scene was exhibited in the House of Lords;

for the Bishop of Exeter so fiercely denounced the proposed bill, that the Archbishop of Canterbury was roused from his meekness, and the ex-chancellor Brougham exclaimed, "*Tantæ ne animis cœlestibus iræ?*" The bill designed to give an immediate appeal from the bishops' courts to the arches court in London, which, wounding the love of power in my lord of Exeter, drew from him such denunciations as provoked others to tell him that there were more appeals lodged against his decisions, than from all the other dioceses of England and Wales put together. But he who so loved to rule showed that he had not learned to obey; for he threatened to set the act at defiance, if it should be passed, and to assert his own episcopal rights, maintaining that they were imprescriptible; since bishops' courts were coeval in date, and therefore coequal in authority, with the New Testament. One important element in the argument he willingly overlooked, that a New Testament bishop was not a lord bishop, was not armed with civil authority, could enforce no penalties, and had, like the dissenting bishops, no other influence than that which the judgment and conscience of the faithful conceded to character and conduct. These contests laid naked the deformities of the state church, and showed, that, while diocesan bishops had armed themselves with the sword of state, which enabled them to persecute those who renounced their jurisdiction, they had lost their power to maintain effective discipline within that church which professed to bow and call them lords.

The principles of religious liberty were asserted, towards the close of the period of which we write,

with unusual energy. "An appeal to Dissenters on their submitting to the obligation imposed by law for the religious celebration of marriage according to the form prescribed by the book of common prayer," was published by Joshua Wilson, Esq., of the Inner Temple. This was a very able assertion of the rights of Dissenters, and a spirited protest against the injury done to them by the law of marriage. The Baptist board published a set of resolutions, in 1832, in which they affirm that "we rejoice in the increased attention now awakened in the public mind to the rights of every part of the community; that, of all the rights of mankind, their spiritual rights are the most sacred; that, while we admire the patience of our forefathers under the disadvantages which still press upon Dissenters, we are compelled to declare that these disadvantages are unjust, since God has ordained that religion should be free; that we feel it unjust to be compelled by law to support a religion from which we dissent, convinced that the expense of supporting Christian ministers, the celebration of Christian worship, and the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom, should not be compulsory but voluntary; and that the employment of religion as an instrument of political government, and the use of political force in support of religion, are alike unjust and derogatory to the dignity of religion."

The Case of the Dissenters, which was drawn up and published and extensively circulated at the request of the body, spoke the same language. It gave offence, and was often attacked as the manifesto of political Dissenters, by those who pleaded for the propriety of giving to Christian bishops a seat in the

assembly of political legislators, which was, at this time, fiercely assailed in the House of Commons, not by Dissenters only, but by those who were warmly attached to the Church of England, which they considered to be injured by the political character of its clergy on the bench of justices, and of its prelates on the bench of bishops.

The spirit in which some of the clergy, at this time, opposed the claims of Dissenters, may be seen by an assertion in a volume which obtained a momentary approbation from the Bishop of London, "that, when persons took on them the profession of Christianity, they at once gave up the right of private judgment, and all other real or fancied natural rights." This slavish doctrine drew forth, however, such a remonstrance to the Bishop of London, from a lay member of the Church of England, that his lordship rescinded his recommendation of the book which contained the obnoxious passage.

The precursor of the most recent attempts to perfect religious liberty was Lord Nugent's bill for the registration of births, introduced into the House of Commons, in 1832. This went into the common receptacle for abortive projects, as did also Sir Robert Peel's bill for giving relief to the Dissenters from the necessity of conforming to the establishment in the celebration of marriage. Sir Robert, in order to ascertain the views of the Dissenters, invited three eminent men among them to an interview, when he entered on office, to supersede the reform ministry. He proposed to secure to the clergy their fees, though the official duty was consigned to the magistrate; but as his

ministry was not able to obtain a majority in parliament, he gave way to his predecessors, who were, however, encouraged, by the movement already made, to introduce a more satisfactory bill. But a complete system of registration of births, marriages, and deaths, was enacted, and marriage was treated as a civil contract, to be made either in a dissenting place of worship, to be registered for the purpose, or in the presence of a registrar, at his office; or in the parochial place of worship, by the established clergy. This was a very liberal measure, which rewarded the long struggles of the Dissenters, and immensely improved the laws of our country, that were before a compound of folly and intolerance. Some imperfections in the arrangement, led many to doubt whether the Dissenters would generally avail themselves of the privilege; but their places of worship were immediately registered for the celebration of marriage, and ministers of all denominations officiated at the marriage of those who belonged to their own charge. Nor have there been wanting instances of persons who have requested dissenting ministers to officiate on this occasion for those who were not members of their communion. The loss of their fees has provoked the established clergy to say hard things of this innovation; but where there is neither force of argument, nor the argument of force, angry declamation produces no effect. The registers of baptisms belonging to dissenting congregations have been rendered valid by being incorporated with the national registration.

The project of Lord Grey's administration for national education in Ireland excited intense interest, and encountered a most determined opposition from the

high church party. As a departure from Laudean politics, it was, indeed, so bold and uncompromising, that none but those who were prepared to abandon the principle of an exclusive establishment in Ireland, could consistently espouse the new measure. A board was established, consisting of one Protestant, and one Catholic prelate, and a Presbyterian barrister; and to unite the children of Catholics and Protestants in the schools, instead of a whole bible, selections approved by the board were to be employed. This furnished the opponents with a specious objection, and with a popular watchword, or war-cry, "a whole bible, instead of a mutilated one;" forgetful, or regardless of the fact, that the common prayer book is framed on the principle of selections. The Dissenters strengthened the hands of the government, by petitioning in favour of the Irish system of education, and a deputation from the Congregational board had an interview with Lord Grey, who, on presenting their petition to the House of Peers, eulogised the petitioners. For this, however, they had to pay the usual tax of being severely condemned by the organs of an illiberal policy. Before the new system of registration was carried into effect, Dissenters petitioned very generally for relief from their grievances—the necessity of celebrating marriage according to the established forms—the want of legal registration of births and burials—the imposition of church rates—the denial of the right of burial in the parochial burying grounds, according to their own rites, performed by their own ministers—and a virtual exclusion from the two universities. The united committee published their resolutions on these

subjects, and presented a memorial to His Majesty's government, as agreed upon, at a meeting held at Dr. Williams's library, May 11th, 1833.

From the above date, a more liberal system of national education was attempted in England; for a grant of twenty thousand pounds was made by the government, for the instruction of the poor, and the lords of the treasury determined to give aid to schools recommended by the National Society, or by the British and Foreign School Society. This was the first time the government of our country had acted upon a plan so liberal; for though it might be objected, that a society which restricted its efforts to one class of Christians, should not have an equal share of the public money with one that was open to all the subjects of the realm; it was still a great concession to religious liberty to grant any portion of the public funds for an education that was not restricted to the Established Church. A more comprehensive system of national education is, however, still a desideratum which is beginning to attract its due share of public attention. It is encompassed with difficulties, and no plan which has yet been proposed is free from objections. Lord Brougham has a new bill in preparation for the accomplishment of this object; but the glaring faults of his former attempt awaken the jealousies of Dissenters, who have shown their zeal for the education of the poor by the extent to which they have carried their own efforts and contributions for that great cause. Happily for the nation and the church of God, there is little reason to fear that the intolerant system of committing education to the care of the Established

Church, and compelling the children of the poor to submit to the inculcation of religion according to the views of one sect, is not likely to be endured by the people, or decreed by the state.

The abolition of slavery in 1834, may be said to belong to the history of civil, rather than religious liberty; but as it was effected by the energetic efforts of the Christian public, so these efforts were called forth by the religious persecution which the slave-holders raised against the Baptist and Methodist missionaries in the West Indies. The masters practically said, slaves shall not be Christians; and the Christian community replied, then negroes shall not be slaves. Nothing but the most determined movement of the whole religious public would have impelled, or enabled the government to accomplish the object, which extended the reign of religious as well as civil liberty in our colonies. The mission chapels which had been burnt down were rebuilt, and the missionaries who had been driven away were restored to the field of their benevolent labours. Lord Mulgrave, who had carried the act of abolition into effect, in Jamaica, conducted himself with so much wisdom, impartiality, and energy, that, on his return to this country, the Missionary Society sent a deputation of directors to present to him their congratulation and thanks. The apprenticeship which had been substituted for slavery, proved such a mockery, that, when the termination of it, with regard to the non-predials, approached, in 1838, a vigorous effort was made by the religious part of the community, to induce government to abolish the apprenticeship of the predials, or field slaves. Though Lord

Brougham, now in opposition, took an active part in this effort, the friends of abolition failed to obtain the consent of government, which, however, adopted such measures as induced the colonial legislatures to abolish the apprenticeship.

From the year 1834, the abolition of church rates became the all-absorbing subject. The Society of Friends had, from its origin, not only protested against the unjust impost, but also suffered constant distraint of goods, rather than pay the demand. Many Dissenters felt that they were now, by the circumstances of the times, called to join in this practical protest. Catholics, in Ireland, had been released from church cess, and, from that time, it had been declared in parliament, that it would be impossible to collect church rates in England. The goods of many Dissenters, were, therefore, seized for church rates, though, in some places, no purchaser could be found, and the property was restored to its owners. Mr. Child, of Bungay, was, for refusing to pay, prosecuted in the Ecclesiastical court, and imprisoned in the gaol of Ipswich. This raised the public indignation ; and such notice was taken of the affair in parliament, and at the annual meeting of the Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty, as could not fail to contribute towards ultimate relief. Mr. Child returned to his residence in triumph, and Lord Althorp introduced into parliament a measure of relief, which the Dissenters rejected ; because it proposed to take from the public taxes, what was required to keep the parochial buildings in repair. If the Dissenters could have consented to this arrangement,

which would have taken the power out of the hands of the parochial vestry, they could have paid the church rates. Lord Althorp's plan being abandoned, when Lord Melbourne became premier, he, after some delay, yielded to the pressure of the Dissenters, and promised a measure that should be satisfactory, but which was kept a secret from the public, till it should be announced to parliament. This proved to be a plan for rendering church lands more productive, and employing the increased revenue to supply the place of church rates. The principle had been acted upon, in the reform of the Irish church, when it was contended, by one who has since joined the high church party, that government had a right to appropriate to other purposes that improved income which its own superior arrangements may have derived from church property. The hostile party, however, contending that no such revenue could be obtained as would relieve the Dissenters from church rates; it became necessary to appoint a commission to investigate the affair. Their report has not yet been made; but those who are supposed to understand the question, including some of the established clergy, declare that a much larger increase of revenue than the ministry calculate upon may be obtained, and the church lands be saved from the scandalous alienations, that have been practised to an extent of which neither the government nor the public were aware.

Meanwhile the church rate war is carried on, and many parishes are agitated with the strife. When vestries have refused the rate, the churchwardens have assumed a power to make one. Mr. Burder, a

deacon of the Independent congregation at Braintree in Essex, is engaged in an expensive suit to resist this claim, which, if established, would overthrow the constitutional principle, that the subject cannot be taxed but with his own consent, given by his representative in parliament. The suit has been carried, by appeal, from the Ecclesiastical court, to the court of Queen's Bench, which, however, has deferred the decision, in expectation, perhaps, of some legislative enactment which may set the odious question at rest. Whichever way the civil court may decide the case, religious liberty must gain; for if the churchwarden should establish his right to make a rate, and thus render the calling of a vestry and putting the question to the vote of the parish, a mere mockery, the nation will be roused to indignation at this new power of taxing them; but if the churchwarden should be found to have no such power, the rates will so often be successfully refused, that it will be necessary to find some other mode of repairing the parochial edifices, and carrying on the worship of the state church. The Church Rate Abolition Society, which has been formed to promote that most desirable object, has also incidentally served the cause of religious liberty in general.

The celebration, in 1835, of the centenary of the translation of the Bible into English, by Tindal, powerfully contributed to diffuse the principles and spirit of religious liberty. The numerous sermons preached on the occasion, several of which were published, naturally turned on the right of private judgment in religion, which was the grand principle of the reformers, in opposition to the claims of the Church of Rome to

dominion over conscience. This, again, led Dissenters to show that their principles were but the full development of those of the Reformation; and to display the happy consequences of leaving every one to judge for himself of the will of God revealed in the scriptures. For as Tindal, who was now so highly venerated as the first translator of the whole scriptures into English, was crowned with martyrdom for his holy zeal, the sin and folly of persecution for religion were demonstrated, and Dissenters could not but advert to the sufferings of the Puritans, who share with Tindal in the honour of being held in everlasting remembrance, as those who were called to make costly sacrifices for being in advance of their own age, and for conveying blessings to the most remote posterity.

Many attempts have been made to extend to other Dissenters the exemption from the necessity of taking legal oaths which the Quakers enjoy. This was granted to a small body called Separatists, soon after the Reform Bill passed; and, in 1838, Lord Denman brought into the House of Lords a bill to allow all who scruple the taking of an oath, to give their affirmation, subject to the usual penalties for perjury. The bill, however, was lost; but immediate notice was given of the introduction of another, to extend to those who have separated from the Quakers, the exemption with regard to oaths which the Society of Friends enjoy.

The Bishop of London carried through the upper house a bill for erecting vestries, under the plea that the churches were profaned by holding vestry meetings in them; but this attempt at additional taxation for the Established Church was thrown out by the Com-

mons, July 10, 1838. A similar defeat was experienced by the established church of Scotland, in the same year; for their attempt to obtain a national grant for the building of additional churches, roused the opposition of Dissenters, who sent a deputation to London, to engage the government, through the influence of the religious public, to refuse the grant. The statistical inquiry by a parliamentary commission, to which the conflict gave rise, demonstrated the fact that a majority of those who attended public worship in the large towns of Scotland, were Dissenters, and that there was a great number of sittings in the established places unoccupied. The government, therefore, refused to grant any aid to the building of churches, except in the more remote rural parishes, which defeated the object of the original promoters of the scheme.

As Drs. Wardlaw and Heugh had been deputed to visit London, to resist the claims of the Scotch national church, an association of the opposite party brought Dr. Chalmers to the metropolis, to lecture in behalf of church establishments. His lectures, which attracted the attendance of dignitaries in church and state, were afterwards published; but while they did not venture to assert that the connexion between the church and the state was of divine right, they left it doubtful whether established churches in general, and the Church of England in particular, were attacked, or defended, by the eloquent champion from the north.

One act of parliament that affected the question of religious liberty would have passed unnoticed, if the dissenting deputies had not roused the attention of

the public by a protest. In a bill to regulate prisons, a provision was made for a salary to Catholic priests who attended on prisoners of their communion, which looked like a covert introduction to a state endowment for the Catholic church. This, which is known to be a favourite project with some statesmen, was justly exposed by the deputies, who observed that no evidence could be brought to show the necessity for the proposed salary, as the Catholic priests had always attended on prisoners of their own church; while the new regulation was an extension of the odious practice of compelling men to contribute towards the services of a church which they do not approve.

In the history of religious liberty which we have now given, many interesting particulars are necessarily omitted; for the acts of persecution in the early part of the period, were so numerous that a complete detail would be wearisome and would appear vindictive; but it is consoling to know that the public mind is happily changed, though it is equally painful to reflect, that, if the populace are more tolerant, it is, in many instances, because they have exchanged high church bigotry for infidel indifference, or hatred to the established church. Municipal reform has deprived the old exclusive corporations of their power, which was generally employed in the cause of intolerance, and the influence of Dissenters in the parliamentary elections has rendered the local magistracy more disposed to court than to provoke those who may turn the scale in a political contest. The government, also, is less inclined than formerly to fill the bench of justices with clergymen, who were, in the earlier part of this cen-

tury, the violators, rather than the conservators, of the public peace, where Dissenters and religious liberty were concerned. The statistical researches that have been instituted for various purposes, have abated the courage of the enemies of dissent, by demonstrating the fact that, in many parts of the kingdom, the majority of those who attend public worship are to be found in places unconnected with the Established Church. The liberality and equity of the Whig government have led its enemies to complain, that Dissenters have more influence over it than the state church; and though Dissenters themselves are not of that opinion, they cannot but observe, with pleasure, that they are more duly appreciated in the present than in former reigns. Our highly popular, youthful Queen came to the throne in circumstances peculiarly favourable to religious liberty. For the Orange party, which is but that section of the high church party which is rampant in Ireland, having allied itself to one of the royal dukes, and given significant hints of its wish to seat him on the throne that belonged to his niece, it was natural that she should turn towards those who adopted the opposite system of politics. She had been wisely educated by her widowed mother, and taught to consider herself the Queen of a nation, and not of a sect. As, therefore, she had not come to the throne without having been in company with a Dissenter, so the first knight she made was one of that body, in which, when she was informed of it, she expressed great pleasure. In the principles and spirit of religious liberty, Dissenters themselves have, during this last period of their history, made great progress.

The voluntary principle, a modern phrase, has become their favourite watchword. This was at once the effect and the cause of advancement. The Puritan fathers had derived their name from their struggles for greater purity; but their descendants were persecuted into the knowledge of the principles of religious liberty. The triumph of the Presbyterians, under the Commonwealth, was disgraced by intolerance, which ruined their cause; for though the Independents came to the rescue of religious liberty, the mischief was done which could not be repaired, the nation was disgusted with the Presbyterians, and their Episcopal adversaries returned to rule the church. For more than a hundred years after, the contest was for preference; but the last half century has witnessed a war of principle. Instead of criticising other men's religion, to show that our own is more worthy of being adopted by the state; it has been the study of Dissenters to convince their countrymen, that the government should protect all sects, and establish none; but leave religion to the voluntary endowment of its own disciples. This has given a more generous, though a more daring character, to the conflict which Dissenters have maintained.

The voluntary principle is not, indeed, of so modern date as its enemies would insinuate. It had long been cherished in secret by men who had outstripped their contemporaries; but circumstances have recently called it out to view, and given it a bold prominence. That it should be viewed with horror by those who had been accustomed to lean upon the state for support, was natural; for they were well aware that state endow-

ments and compulsory tithes had extinguished the generosity of Christian principle, which in purer times more than sufficed for the support of the Church of Christ. That statesmen should embrace the principle, as soon as presented to their minds, was not to be expected; for it proposed to take from them a patronage on which they were accustomed to lean, though this had often proved a broken reed, which not only failed to support, but even pierced their hand. But no great and good principle ever achieves a sudden and an easy triumph. Minor maxims may spring into instantaneous possession of their ephemeral popularity; but the grand principles that are destined to alter, improve, and sway the world, are first conceived, pondered over, and cherished in the breasts of a few distinguished men; then announced, to startle, offend, and disgust the mass; consigned to a temporary oblivion, they rise again to win a more extensive approbation and incur increased odium; persecuted into importance, they struggle for the victory; vanquished they seem for ever lost; but springing up again, stronger for defeat, they wrest the sceptre from their opponents, to rule and bless the world, which wonders that it should have been so slow to learn what is so manifestly true and pre-eminently good.

The voluntary principle has forced itself upon public notice, and those who would willingly have left it to expire in oblivion, have been compelled to promote its triumphs by their censure; while others, more favourably disposed, acknowledge that if the connexion of the state with the church did not already exist, it ought not to be introduced. The ministers of

the crown, though vexed by the Toryism of the Established Clergy, cannot be expectedto extricate themselves from their embarrassment, by espousing the voluntary principle, till it has acquired far more dominion over the public mind; but it has won other advocates, where it might have looked for most determined hostility. Presbyterians who once denounced religious liberty, as the great Diana of the Independents, now join them in their war against state churches. The elder Dissenters of Scotland, most firm Presbyterians, are become the zealous, energetic advocates of the voluntary principle, and their most esteemed ministers are seen co-operating with the leading pastors of the Independent churches north of the Tweed, in pressing upon government the duty of leaving religion to its own energies and resources. Even Roman Catholics are beginning to adopt the same principle; and the Irish church seems destined to grace its triumph. The vast preponderance of Roman Catholics in the sister isle has wrested from the Protestant establishment its long cherished argument, that the religion of the majority should be taken into alliance with the state; and though the fiction of the united church of England and Ireland has been created, to save appearances, it has only given birth to a new difficulty; for if the whole empire is to be taken together, the united church can by no means claim the majority. To cut this political knot, some statesmen contend for taking the Irish Catholic church into the pay of the state; but the popular leaders of that communion, afraid of seeing their priests the indolent tools of government, oppose to this plan the

claims of the voluntary principle. Whatever may be the private opinions of the priesthood, they, who are supposed to rule the laity with tyrannical sway, dare not plead against the policy of the popular champions. This may be supposed to indicate nothing more than political intrigue; and certainly it requires overwhelming evidence to convince an acute observer that the favourite principle of the Independents and Quakers can have been adopted by those who are at the other extremity of the scale of sects; but as the Catholic church has shown a wonderful power of adaptation to circumstances, and even Episcopalians are the great champions of the voluntary principle in the United States of America, why may not Catholics be so in Ireland?

In fact, the face of the world is so changed, and the Catholic church finds that the civil power is so determined to maintain the dominion which it has acquired over the ecclesiastical, that, vexed and thwarted, the priesthood begins to think it might do more by influence over the people, than by alliance with the government. The state of dependence in which the occupant of the holy Roman see is held by the Austrian head of the holy Roman empire, frets and disgusts many discerning Catholics, who, on visiting Rome, see that the Pope has purchased his limited temporal sovereignty by the loss of his wider ecclesiastical dominion. Such revolutions have happened in public opinion, that, while Oxford exhibits her champions for an almost unmasked Popery, Catholics at Rome have expressed their wish to see the Pope divested of his civil power, and confined to his spiritual

character, as the chief pastor of the Christian church. Mere politicians, however, look far more favourably on the Dissenters' advocacy of the voluntary principle, than such men ever did on the arguments against diocesan episcopacy, a liturgy, and the other distinctive characteristics of the Church of England. The ecclesiastical knowledge required for waging the ancient war, must always render its victories slow and small; while the modern question demands nothing but common sense, or that appeal to civil history which is open to men of ordinary education. No man can be ashamed of pleading for doing to others as we would they should do to us, the essence of the voluntary principle; but to argue for our own domination over another man's conscience, and our right to make him pay for our religion, is an invidious task. It can, therefore, excite no surprise that the true, the just, the generous principle has become the popular favourite; while its antagonist has been thrown upon the clergy and the aristocracy for support.

Religious liberty has not, however, to boast of triumphs without defeats. The extension of the state church, with the creation of new bishops, in our colonies, especially in the East Indies; the erection of new churches, at the public expense; the consequent increase of a state clergy; the failure of the attempt to remove the bishops from the House of Lords; and the long delay of relief from church rates; may be considered as discomfitures, to abate the pride of victory.

To revive the memory of those ages of injustice and cruelty through which our Nonconformist ancestors

nobly passed, is not desirable. We should rather write injuries in dust, that they may be quickly obliterated. But the false assumption by which they were attempted to be justified, should be exposed to public reprobation and scorn.

By the glorious revolution of 1688, the long and dreary reign of persecution terminated, in what is called toleration, a word dear to our forefathers, because they contrasted it with the intolerance they had been compelled to endure; but to us almost odious, because we compare it with the perfect religious liberty we have a right to enjoy.

If, however, toleration is an insolent term, implying either permission to our brother to follow his own convictions, with which we have no right to interfere, or permission to our Maker to receive worship which we deem it possible for him to endure; still toleration, as a first step towards our original rights, is to us triumph, to our antagonists a confession of defeat. For what is the language of governments which tolerate? "We have attempted to grasp a rule which we cannot retain; we have advanced into an empire from which we must retreat; we have assumed a dominion over conscience that is too mighty for our arm; we have discovered that though we can subdue physical violence with superior force, we have neither sword nor sceptre that can conquer, or sway the moral energies of souls; though we can crush rebels against the civil state, we must suffer, or in other words tolerate, those who refuse to yield to our dictation in religion." For when a state allows and protects other churches than those which it adopts and endows,

it acts in religion as it never could do in civil affairs. No state could suffer distinct and rival governments, for this would be subversive of all authority; but when, in the advancement of knowledge and liberty, the civil authorities find themselves compelled to suffer other churches besides that of the state, they virtually confess, that, in religion they must yield to paramount authority and a superior moral force. Would that all tolerant governments had followed out this confession to its legitimate extent! For here they cannot stop. They must advance, or recede; go back to the despotic intolerance of Spain, or forward to the absolute liberty of the United States of America.

But good principles are, even when elicited, slowly conducted to their legitimate triumphs. Our government, which has long protected other churches, still attempts to maintain the exclusive rights of one; and as it, till lately, exposed the rest to many odious disabilities, so it imposes on them, to this day, an unjust load of taxation, and of comparative disgrace. At this we cannot wonder, when we reflect how that branch of the legislature, which was designed to represent the people, was formerly constituted; but the triumph of reform now opens to our country a new and more glorious career. We have been told by high authorities, that it is our own fault if we do not obtain all that we can reasonably ask.

It becomes us, then, first to know what we should claim; and immediately to put into operation the means by which it may be acquired. We should ask that our government would retreat within its own proper sphere, the protection of the peace of society

and the equal rights of all, leaving religion where Christ left it, to the government and protection of the Most High.

To the attainment of this consummation so devoutly to be wished, many things conspire. Those who adhere to the prejudices of the dark ages, and the policy that hunted our forefathers to the dungeon and the stake, confess and complain that by the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts, and the emancipation of the Catholics, the compact between the church and the state was broken; so that the church is no longer bound to submit to the legislation of a parliament into which her enemies are admitted, on whose enactments she may well be supposed to look with a jealous eye.

No modification of an evil so gross, so essentially unjust, as the union between the church and the state, ought to satisfy those who are duly concerned for their country's welfare, and the paramount interests of the Christian faith. Dissenters ought to ask temperately and respectfully, indeed, but firmly and incessantly, for the entire dissolution of the unhallowed, unauthorised and pernicious alliance. This demand may at first startle the timid and the ill-informed; but it will soon become familiar to their minds, and by presenting its reasons to their judgment, commend itself to their conscience, if not to their interests or their choice. To obtain it with the general consent must be our noblest aim; but, failing in this, we should seek to accomplish our object at the smallest possible cost of mortification and discontent. Happily, the better part of the Established Church is already beginning to see that this change is as desirable for them as for us, and

among them some of the boldest avowals of our principles have been made, while the more bigoted part have, for opposite reasons, begun to seek a similar, if not the same, end. As a noble senator justly observed, that the repeal of the Test Act was even more desirable for the Church of England, which was the sinning party, than for the Dissenters, who were sinned against; so we affirm that the church, which is now chained to the state, will be a greater gainer by the dissolution of the bond, than those who, not being thus entangled, are suffering rather than doing evil.

But since it is unreasonable to expect to undo in a day the accumulated evils of ages, we should be prepared for delays, and determined to secure at once what is attainable, while we incessantly pursue all that is just. The difficulties of the task should dictate to us patience, and the prejudices we must encounter should be met with the arms of reason in the spirit of love; though we deny that we should, for one moment, descend from our highest claims, or stop, even to take breath in our pursuit.

As there is no more glaring relict of the ancient domination of a state church than the temporal baronies of the bishops, and their consequent seat in the House of Peers, we should petition for the removal of this grievance, which, as it arose when churchmen were prime ministers, bishops led armies, and the church and the nation were supposed to be one body under different aspects; so it should fall, at the arrival of a happier era, and on the knowledge of the fact that the vast majority of the united empire does not belong to the united church. It has scarcely an existence in

three parts out of four. Scotland is Presbyterian, Ireland chiefly Catholic, and Wales exhibits an immense preponderance of Dissenters, while in England, the fourth great division of our country, a majority of those who show their concern for religion by constant attendance on its ordinances, dissent from the Established Church. The church of Rome ceased to be the established religion, long before it was reduced to such a minority. We therefore join with our opponents in saying, "It is high time that our enemies ceased to legislate for us."

The clerical tithes, which had become such a grievance to Ireland, that their abolition seems inevitable, should be blotted from the statutes of the British empire. As they are a species of national property, they should be appropriated to national use; if not to the diminution of taxation, to the relief and education of the poor, for whom a part of them was intended.

Church rates having been abolished in Ireland, on the avowed principle that it is a hardship for people of one religious persuasion to be thus taxed to support the worship of another, should be equally abolished in England and Wales. For these impositions give the power of taxation to petty parochial parliaments, often chosen by a junta in which reign the worst corruptions that were once supported by an unreformed senate. To provide the bread and the wine, that one religious body may celebrate the feast of redeeming love, by distraining the goods of others who support their own worship, is impious and shocking. It is a contradiction in legislation, first to say, that we are

at liberty to have our own churches, and then to decree that we must pay for that of others.

The parochial burying-grounds are, in Ireland, open to all denominations, whose ministers there perform the rites of their own church. What they gained by taking forcible possession, we may hope will be conceded to us by the justice and liberality of the state, which should be respectfully told that we can no longer endure the monopoly of public property, by a party which obtrudes its services where they are not welcome, and demands fees for violating our religious feelings, at a moment when the most sacred griefs cause irritation and insult to be keenly felt.

To show that these are not the mere private sentiments of the historian, this chapter will close with two documents, which will exhibit the spirit of religious liberty in Dissenters during this period.

"The Committee of Deputies of the three denominations of Dissenters, Presbyterian, Independent, and Baptist, with Deputations from the general body of Ministers, the Protestant Society, and the United Associate Presbytery, having formed themselves into a United Committee, think it expedient to state their present legal position, and some of the reasons and principles on which they recommend a simultaneous and united application of the Dissenters to the legislature of their country for the consideration of their claims, and the redress of their grievances.

"The history of Protestant Dissenters has abundantly proved that religious liberty is the result, not of spon-

taneous, but of compelled legislation. It is the natural tendency of power to extend and perpetuate its own aggressions. Those limitations which in the progress of states it is found necessary to impose in order to the safety and happiness of society, determine the actual amount of civil liberty which they respectively enjoy. Such liberty was never gained without effort, and never established without resistance; but its triumphs are inevitable, when communities are sufficiently enlightened to understand its principles, and have the public virtue which is requisite in order to maintain them.

"Religious liberty has been brought to its present favourable position, by the slow but certain advancement of society in knowledge, truth, and justice. Every step of its progress has been a struggle, and every accession to its amount and its strength has been secured by persevering opposition to unrighteous usurpation. The erasure of penal statutes affecting religion from the criminal code of our country, will show the extent of those encroachments which have been successively made by enlightened policy on unjust pretensions.

"The terms Protestantism and Nonconformity are alike of relative import, and suppose the existence of institutions and principles to which they are respectively opposed. Nor is there one argument that can be advanced in defence of Protestantism, that may not, in its essential elements, be applied to the vindication of Nonconformity. Nonconformity had its origin in the principles maintained and acted upon at the Reformation; and the same convictions and feelings

which led to a successful resistance to the tyranny of Papal Rome, determined the consistent advocates of that resistance to oppose the Protestant tyranny of the Tudors and the Stuarts. When the Act of Uniformity was passed, it was not for the sake of vestments and forms that our venerable ancestors withheld their acquiescence, but because, in the principles which led to their adoption, there was no recognition of personal and social rights; no accordance with the liberty of the Christian dispensation; no allowance for weak and tender consciences; but a system of arbitrary and capricious enactments, which directly impugned the great principles of the Reformation, and invaded the prerogatives of Him who is our only master and lord. Not finding a sufficient code for the regulation of their ecclesiastical system in the New Testament, they added an apocryphal book of Leviticus to its canon, and claimed for this appendage of human origin implicit faith and unresisting obedience.

"Thus originated the cause of religious dissent. It had, in the first instance, a special reference to the ceremonies imposed by acts of parliament and royal dictation; other reasons of dissent have been gradually intermingled with these primary causes of secession, and in proportion to the diffusion of scriptural knowledge and the progress of enlightened inquiry, the grounds of Nonconformity have been more firmly and invincibly established. In those grounds of Nonconformity we recognise principles of the highest importance to the true prosperity of states, and the legitimate interests of religion. They respect the sole and exclusive sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures, the

right of all men to judge for themselves in the interpretation and use of that divine standard, and the corresponding right to act according to their judgment in matters of religion, so long as the exercise of that right interferes not with the rights of others. As human laws do not originate these rights, so human laws cannot abridge them without an invasion of the prerogatives of the Most High. For their exercise, men are accountable to God alone. They are the unalienable and universal property of our species. No earthly power can enter with impunity the sacred recesses of conscience.

"The exertion of force for the suppression of error, or the establishment of truth, proceeds upon the assumption of infallibility; a principle which, unless supported by supernatural evidences, is an act of impiety towards God, and of injustice towards man. The Governor of the world has invested no living tribunal, whether civil or ecclesiastical, with this prerogative; and no instance of its pretension, or its interference can be adduced, which has not tended to perpetuate error, promote corruption, and support intolerance. If this assumed power be exercised, there are no definable limits to its operation; it invariably secularizes every form of Christianity with which it is associated, and becomes a virtual rejection of the evidence, the independence, and the sufficiency of divine revelation.

"The principle of *force*, thus directly opposed to the genius and tendencies of Christianity, is inseparable from all civil legislation in *matters of religion*. The moment the authority of law is brought to bear

on the promotion, or the suppression of theological opinions or plans of ecclesiastical polity, the sanctions of law must inevitably operate by restrictions and penalties, while suffering, to a greater or less degree, is imposed on the conscientious, and they are compelled to endure such suffering, in proportion to the degree of their moral sensibility; temptations on the other hand are presented to an interested and unprincipled acquiescence in the claims of the dominant system. Adventitious distinctions are thus connected with an adherence to that system, which are unfavourable to the interests of honest inquiry, and the maintenance of pure integrity. Principles and systems are not left to the examination of impartial reason. If one section of the Christian church is unjustly exalted, the members of other sections, equally entitled to the esteem and confidence of their fellow-subjects, on the ground of their personal excellence or their public character, are unjustly depressed. Talents and virtues are not the criteria of worth, or the sources of influence; but the *accidental* combination of such talents or virtues, with the religious opinion or the religious ritual, which the civil magistrate has happened to take under his exclusive patronage, and to the profession of which, under the authority of the legislature, he has attached exclusive privileges. We inquire not on this occasion into the truth or the fallacy of such opinions, the suitableness or the unsuitableness of such ritual to the genius of Christianity, the scriptural or the unscriptural character of the particular faith and polity which may be thus fostered and sanctioned by the state. These are altogether irrelevant questions in the present argument. But, assuming

even the perfect and unimpeachable excellency of any given system of principles and polity, we believe that *no civil power on earth can incorporate such a system with its legislation and government so as to employ the authority of law to support it, without positive injustice to such as conscientiously maintain and adopt other systems of religion, and moral injury to the purity of the privileged party.* It cannot be pretended that the *Christian* revelation affords the shadow of a pretext for such incorporation: the purest ages of the Christian church witnessed no alliance of the civil government with its principles or its rites. The actual history of establishments, *as such*, has proved that in all periods and under all modifications, error, corruption, and intolerance, have been proportioned to the degree in which they have been uncontrolled and dominant. What have been the most prolific sources of intestine commotion in states, of vacillating policy in governments, of desolating wars and international jealousies, but the various questions that have arisen out of the claims of rival sects, and the feuds of religious parties? What are the chief hindrances, at this moment, to the progress of pure Christianity in every Protestant and Papal state of Europe, but the restrictions created by the fears of ecclesiastical monopolists? What has been the prolific source of Ireland's wrongs, but the excitement of religious contention arising from the same exclusive principle? It has been in all ages the great error of states, that they have not left religion to the care of its own professors and advocates, and the protection of its great Author. By this intermeddling, infidelity is strengthened, hypocrisy is

encouraged, injurious distinctions are created, free inquiry is fettered, and honest co-operation is prevented. Had there been no alliance of civil governments with ecclesiastical polity; had the things that are Cæsar's been always kept in a state of complete distinctness and separation from "the things that are God's," religion would have preserved its purity and its efficiency in the strength of its own evidence and the majesty of its own principles, civil government would have been limited to its specific and appropriate sphere. Those sustaining its functions in their individual and unofficial capacity, would have been left to the unrestricted exercise of all the influence that can be legitimately employed in the maintenance of their religious principles; rival parties unfettered by civil distinctions, without bribes to prevent them, or penalties to deter them, would have had free scope for the discussion and comparison of their respective claims to the regard of society. The possibilities of union without compromise, and of variation without strife, would have been inconceivably enhanced, while the equal and impartial protection of the civil authorities, extended alike to all the forms of religious profession, so long as their respective adherents maintained the peace and order of society, would have uniformly contributed to the stability of empires, and the advancement of Christianity.

"It is the deep conviction felt on this subject, that impels this Committee thus prominently to state their principles in reference to this primary ground of religious Nonconformity. This they regard as the basis of all their claims to the consideration of the British

legislature. They have specific grievances of which to complain, and the removal of which they anticipate on the grounds of impartial justice. But whatever may be the immediate result of their efforts, they feel that it would be a violation of their own consciences, did they not avow their firm belief, that until there is a separation of all ecclesiastical systems from that alliance with the civil power which employs the authority and penalties of law, to support the religion of Jesus Christ, and, until all sections of his universal church are left to their own resources and arrangements alone, for their preservation and extension, they will consider the main ground of their Nonconformity unaltered, and their highest claim to an impartial protection of the legislature disregarded. They prescribe not the methods, or the process, by which this object may be effected, and this chief grievance redressed. They desire no means to be employed in the discussion and determination of the question, but those of fair reasoning and deliberate conviction. They are not identified with the interest of faction, or the intrigues of political destructives. To no legitimate interests of their fellow-subjects are they hostile ; nor, if the legislative adoption and recognition of these principles were to involve a protracted series of preparatory and provisional arrangements, are they desirous to hurry on by precipitation, and still less by violence, the transition from a system of injustice and impolicy to a state of pure, equal, and universal freedom.

"But they have thus recorded their deliberate and solemn testimony, and leave to the progress of events and the determination of an honest legislature, and

the providence of the Most High, the decision of the great question."

The second document will show the present position of Dissenters, as it is the last Report of a body appointed to watch over the civil rights of Dissenters.

"*Report of the Committee of Deputies of the Protestant Dissenters to the General Meeting, on the 27th December*, 1837.

"The short period which has elapsed since your last annual meeting has been marked by events of great national importance,—by the death of a king,—the accession of a queen,—the consequent dissolution of an assembled parliament, and the election of a new one,—all of which have necessarily exerted a direct and powerful influence upon the religious and civil rights of Protestant Dissenters.

"Your Committee, in laying before you the report of its proceedings during this eventful year, will first state the course which it has adopted in reference to the general claims of Dissenters, and then briefly advert to some matters of detail, more particularly connected with the business and interests of this deputation.

"The principal exertions of your Committee, and of the United Committee, have been directed to the question of church rates; and of the grievances of which Dissenters still have to complain, this may be considered as the most important. Too long had the friends of civil equality remained quiescent, if not

supine, under this obnoxious tax; either submitting to the exaction without a murmur, or betraying weakness by unorganised opposition. But they have now become sensible of their wrongs, and are determined to obtain redress.

"This question has long engaged the attention of the Deputation, but it has never been so warmly taken up by Protestant Dissenters, and the friends of religious liberty generally, as during the year that has just elapsed. It is now deemed to be one of paramount importance by all parties, and the country has been agitated upon it to an extent almost unprecedented. The interested opponents of the abolition of church rates have been roused to make the most extraordinary exertions, by a general demonstration against the continuance of this impost.

"So deep and extended had this feeling become throughout the kingdom, that in order to concentrate the opposition to this ecclesiastical tax, delegates from all parts of the country were sent to the metropolis. Your Committee, and the United Committee (some of whose most active members were amongst the promoters of this assembly of Delegates,) deputed some of their members to attend their meetings. And your Committee feels it to be its duty to state, that in consequence of the admirable arrangements of the Church Rate Abolition Society, (to the funds of which association your Committee has cheerfully subscribed,) those meetings have systematized and augmented the exertions for the removal of this grievance.

"Previous to the meeting of Delegates, however, a deputation from the United Committee waited upon

Lord John Russell, to request an explanation of the measures intended to be proposed relative to church rates; and that deputation was informed that government had prepared a plan for their abolition. The United Committee, upon receiving this information, immediately published a resolution, which was extensively advertised and circulated, recommending the metropolitan congregations to be ready with petitions to both Houses of Parliament, for presentation at the commencement of the session, for early and entire relief from church rates, and to urge their representatives to afford the respective petitions their most active and decided support.

"When the ministerial resolution relative to church rates was brought forward by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the United Committee met on the 8th of March, and expressed its cordial approbation of the general principle of the measure.

"A Deputation waited upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer, on the 16th, to assure him, that so far as the plan had been explained, it had given great satisfaction to the Dissenters; and to express a hope that those parishes which had contracted debts on the security of church rates would be relieved; but the right honourable gentleman did not think that it would be expedient to afford the relief suggested, in connexion with the present measure, as those local debts were large, and the available surplus under the bill would be small.

"The following is a copy of the resolution adopted by the House of Commons, on the 15th of March, by a majority of twenty-three:—

"'That for the repair and maintenance of parochial churches and chapels in England and Wales, and the due celebration of divine worship therein, a permanent and adequate provision be made out of an increased value given to church lands, by the introduction of a new system of management, and by the application of the proceeds of pew rents; the collection of church rates ceasing altogether from a day to be determined by law; and that, in order to facilitate and give early effect to this resolution, the commissioners of His Majesty's treasury be authorised to make advances on the security, and repayable out of the produce of such church lands.'

"On the 20th of that month the United Committee determined to prepare an 'Address to the Protestants of England and Wales,' on the whole question of church rate; and an address was accordingly published. Copies of it were sent to the members of His Majesty's government, and many members of both houses, by whom it was promptly acknowledged. On the 29th this Deputation petitioned the House of Commons in favour of the measure, and expressed, in a series of resolutions, its entire approval of the plan. And while you congratulated the Dissenters on the recognition, by the House of Commons, of a principle which must eventually secure the abolition of church rates, you called upon them to advance the progress of this measure by the use of all legal and constitutional means.

"On Tuesday, the 23rd of May, the resolution already quoted was read a second time in the House of Commons; and your Committee laments to say that there was a majority of five only in favour of this most conciliatory and just proposition.

"On the next day, the United Committee met, and sought an interview with government, to ascertain their intentions respecting the measure; and the Deputation was informed that ministers, notwithstanding the smallness of the majority, would not desert the measure; but hoped to bring it forward again next session, on much stronger grounds, after a committee had inquired into and reported on the present state of the ecclesiastical property which would be affected by it. On the last day of that month the United Committee received the report of this interview, and published resolutions of thanks to His Majesty's ministers, and to the liberal majority in the House of Commons, who afforded to the government their independent and continued support, and had again evinced their disposition to afford to Protestant Dissenters and the people of England, this important and much-needed relief.

"The proposal of a parliamentary inquiry into the mode in which the property of the Established Church is now administered, was decidedly approved by that Committee, which felt assured that the result would evince the wisdom and practicability of the measure."

CHAPTER III.

SEMINARIES FOR THE DISSENTING MINISTRY.

A COMPARISON of the earliest periods of our history with the contents of this chapter will show that, with the increase of dissenting churches, provision is made for a supply of well educated ministers. For most of those seminaries that formerly existed are not only maintained, but enlarged, as well as improved; and new ones have been formed under favourable auspices. The older institutions, and those of the metropolis or its vicinity, claim the first attention; but we shall present to view, not merely those which are scattered over England, but such as belong to the same class in Wales, Scotland, and Ireland.

Homerton Old College.

From the beginning of the year 1806, to September, 1813, the Rev. Thomas Hill taught the classics and Hebrew in this seminary, of which he was, during the last six years of his life, resident tutor. Death removed him from his useful labours, in the twenty-ninth year of his age. He was a native of Lancashire, his parents and their ancestors having resided at Moss Hall, near Bury. He studied for the ministry under Dr. Williams, at Rotherham, and immediately after quitting the seminary, was chosen to succeed Dr. John

Pye Smith, who removed from the classical to the theological chair.

Mr. Hill married Dr. Williams' eldest daughter, whose early death was a severe loss to the Institution, as well as to her husband. He had been compelled, for a time, to relinquish his preparatory studies; and symptoms of consumption returning, he retired to his native place, where he died, August 25, 1813, saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

Called in youth to preside over the studies of those who were scarcely his juniors, his admirable qualities justified the hazardous choice, and gained the hearts of the students, whose dearest hopes were blighted by his early death. Having adopted Dr. Williams' views of theology, he defended them, in a publication which was equally creditable to his ability and temper. He was succeeded, at the close of the year 1813, by Rev. William Walford, of Great Yarmouth, who was, in the year 1831, compelled, by severe relative and personal affliction, to retire. The Rev. Daniel Godfrey Bishop was, in the same year, chosen to fill the vacant chair, which he still holds, as Dr. Smith does that of theology.

The number of students is rather under twenty, and the course of study is divided into the classical, which is introductory, and that which is called, by emphasis, the academical. The former usually includes two years, which are devoted to Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and mathematics; the latter commences with what is called the matriculation, when the student is admitted, by a special Latin form, into the theological class. Without abandoning the study of languages,

he receives lectures on biblical criticism, Jewish antiquities, church history, civil and canon law, doctrinal and practical theology, and the pastoral care. Towards the expiration of four years, this course is followed by what is termed passing trials, when a Latin testimonial is given, and the student is at liberty to accept an invitation to the pastoral office.

The buildings of this elder suburban seminary having become dilapidated, were repaired, and twenty studies were fitted up, in 1811, at an expense of nearly four thousand pounds; but, in 1822, the whole, being pronounced insecure, was taken down, and the present edifice erected, which cost nine thousand. Subscription to doctrinal articles, formerly required of those who entered this institution, was, in 1817, abandoned; and the ancient appellation of the King's Head Society, given to the supporters of the seminary, was then exchanged for that of the Homerton Academy Society.

Highbury College; formerly Hoxton Academy.

Dr. Simpson, who was the resident and theological tutor, at the commencement of this period, was removed by death, in the year 1817. He was born in Scotland, and early joined a congregation of Antiburghers, in the north of England; but, removing to Cotherstone, he obtained, through the ministry of Mr. Pratman, a valuable dissenting minister, that evangelical light and liberty to which he had hitherto been a stranger. His comments on that event give an insight into his character. "I was," said he, "like one transported to the third heavens. The recollection

of those days is, after a lapse of fifty years, still fresh and delightful."

A change so decided was quickly followed by intimations of a call to public usefulness. Being invited to pray in public, one of the hearers said to him, "Oh, Simpson, you have been to the gates of heaven, and you have carried us along with you." Mr. Pratman recommended him to enter the theological seminary at Heckmondwike, in Yorkshire, then under the tuition of the venerable Mr. Scott. Here Mr. Simpson studied four years, with exemplary diligence and success.

He commenced his ministry in Lancashire; first at Haslingden; then at Elswick; and afterwards removed to Bolton, where he spent nine years. He was called thence to be tutor at the academy recently removed from Mile End to Hoxton. While he taught theology and Hebrew, he, for some time, ministered in Artillery Street, London. He afterwards gathered a congregation in a small place adjoining the academy, where a church was at length formed, and supplied with preachers from the country.

From the university of Glasgow he received the diploma of doctor of divinity. But his health declining, he resigned, in 1817, the chair he had filled for twenty-seven years. In his last illness, he said to a minister who had been educated under him, "I have been, this day, looking keenly into my condition, and I cannot doubt for the life of me. Had I ten thousand souls, I would, at this moment, cast them all into the hands of Christ." He died, December 21, 1818, aged seventy-two. Energy and ardent attachment to evan-

gelical truth were his most distinguishing qualities; but his ministry was not acceptable in proportion to the estimation in which his character was held; for his voice was harsh, and his Scotch accent was to many unintelligible.

The Rev. W. Harris, LL.D., was invited, from the pastoral care of a congregational church at Cambridge, to become the resident theological tutor at Hoxton. He took also the charge of a small flock at Stoke Newington, but was removed by death, at the age of fifty-four, in the year 1830. He was a man of great intellectual and religious excellence, whose judicious and instructive ministry was rendered peculiarly engaging by a mild dignity of manner and a most musical voice. His sun, which went down at noon, shed heavenly rays; for his meek submission to the sovereign will of God, and his calm reliance on Christ, left a lasting impression on survivors.

Dr. Ebenezer Henderson, who had presided over the Mission College at Hoxton, succeeded Dr. Harris as theological tutor in the seminary, now removed from Hoxton to Highbury.

Dr. Henry Foster Burder, who had, for twenty years, taught mathematics and mental philosophy, resigned his office in 1830. Mr. Atkinson, who had been classical tutor at Hoxton, removed, to take charge of the Dissenting Grammar School at Mill Hill, near London; and the Rev. John Hooper, A.M., who had been educated at Hoxton, taught the classics there, for seventeen years. He was removed from this office, and from the care of a congregation in Old Gravel

Lane, by a paralytic stroke, on the 9th of December, 1826. He was a native of Wareham, in Dorsetshire, where, renouncing the Established Church, he joined that of the Independents, and from thence was recommended to the seminary for the ministry, at Hoxton. He finished his education at the university of Glasgow, and took his degree in 1808. His kindness endeared him to his flock, and to the students under his care. He was succeeded by the present resident and classical tutor, Dr. Halley.

It was determined, in 1825, that the college should be removed from Hoxton, a confined, unhealthy situation, to an estate purchased in Highbury Park for two thousand guineas, and given to the institution by the treasurer, Thomas Wilson, Esq. A handsome building was erected, which, with its furniture, cost twenty thousand pounds. It contains a residence for the classical tutor, and a spacious library, as well as a separate study and bed-room for each of forty students. The voluntary contributions of the friends of religion and learning among Dissenters, supplied the means of meeting this large expenditure.

The average number of students approaches to forty. Dr. Henderson teaches theology and the oriental languages. Dr. Halley the Greek and Latin classics, and Professor Rogers, of University College, London, delivers lectures on rhetoric and mental philosophy. The course of education occupies four years, and, since the year 1808, nearly three hundred students have been received into this institution, including Dr. Morrison, the translator of the Scriptures into Chi-

nese, and Dr. Philip, the liberator of South Africa, as well as many more who are preaching the Gospel in almost every quarter of the globe.

Coward College, London (late Wymondley).

The Rev. W. Parry, who held the theological chair at Wymondley, from the year 1799, though presiding over an institution of mixed character, is pronounced by those who knew him well, a divine of unquestionable orthodoxy. After twenty years, he was removed from his office by death. "The blood and righteousness of Christ," he said, at the close of life, "are my only plea. As to the fine spun theories of modern theology, they are but flimsy cobwebs; one blast from eternity will blow them all away."

Mr. Parry was succeeded by Mr. Atkinson of Epsom, in Surrey; but he was removed from this world in 1821. The Rev. Thomas Morell was then called from St. Neots, in Huntingdonshire, to preside over this institution. Mr. Beuley, who died about a year before Mr. Parry, was classical tutor for many years; and was succeeded by the Rev. Joseph Turnbull, B. A., on whose resignation Mr. Lee was appointed, and after him Mr. Hull became classical tutor. But, in 1832, a total change was made in this institution; for the trustees, wisely determining to avail themselves of the advantages of the London University, bought a handsome building in Byng Place, Torrington Square, near University College, and there placed the seminary, under the name of Coward College, to perpetuate the memory of its founder.

There is now no other tutor than Mr. Morell, who

fills the theological chair; but, while the students are lodged and boarded in the house, they attend the classes of the professors of University College, for instruction in Hebrew and the classics, mathematics, and mental philosophy.

Hackney Theological Seminary.

This academy is the offspring of "the Village Itineracy, for sending the Gospel into the dark parts of our country." The Rev. John Eyre, A. M., a minister of the establishment, united, in 1796, with Edward Hanson, Esq., Mr. David Whitaker, and Mrs. Mather, in sending out evangelical preachers to labour in Hampshire, Surrey, and Sussex. They received, in 1801, an efficient coadjutor in Charles Townsend, Esq., who offered to invest £10,000 for the use of the Society, in order to accomplish Mr. Eyre's scheme for the formation of a theological seminary, to educate pious young men for the service of the Village Itineracy. Two years after, three of these benefactors to mankind died, including Mr. Eyre. This faithful minister of Christ was nobly distinguished by his superiority to a sectarian spirit, and by his generous zeal for the best interests of mankind. As the first secretary of the London Missionary Society, he was a benefactor to the heathen; and as the father of the Village Itineracy, and of its Theological Seminary, he has become a blessing to our native land. The wealth which he did not himself possess, he contrived to bestow, by acquiring a hallowed influence over those whose talent of gold might otherwise have been buried in the earth. The Theological Seminary was

opened in 1803; Joseph Hardcastle, Esq., being chosen treasurer; and the Rev. Matthew Wilks, minister of the Tabernacle, secretary, and superintendent. The Rev. George Collison, A. M., who had taught the classics at Hoxton College, was elected tutor. The residuary legatee of Mr. Townsend having refused to pay the £10,000 which he bequeathed, the opinions of the attorney and solicitor general were given in favour of the institution, and the sum being obtained, was invested in trust for the benevolent purposes of the donor. The number of students was, at first, small, but is now from ten to fifteen. The original plan of education was limited to theology, as the name of the institution intimates; but the committee of management has wisely extended its views. Latin, Greek, and Hebrew are now rendered subservient to the study of divinity, and of the peculiar duties of the pastoral care; and the Rev. Samuel Ransom has been appointed classical tutor.

The Village Itineracy possesses property to the annual value of about a thousand pounds, the greater part of which is expended on the seminary, that has sent forth, during the course of thirty-two years, more than a hundred and twenty preachers of the gospel. Of these, two are officiating in the Establishment, and several are labouring in foreign parts, Mr. Medhurst having devoted himself to the millions of China. The ministers who have been educated at Hackney are assisted by pecuniary grants from the Village Itineracy, when needful, either for their own support, or the erection and enlargement of places of worship.

About £500 were expended in 1836, on the purchase of buildings adjoining to the academy house

and on its repairs and additional furniture. The late Rev. Rowland Hill, who had been a zealous friend of the institution, bequeathed, at his death, a considerable sum, to aid the operations of the Village Itineracy. During the last thirty years, this institution has been the means of erecting, or enlarging, fifty chapels, in sixteen counties of England, by the labours of more than one hundred and twenty ministers, sent forth to preach the gospel.

Cheshunt College.

To the connexion of the celebrated Countess of Huntingdon this seminary belongs. It, therefore, partakes of her spirit, which was not that of theoretical dissent. The institution was founded and supported at the sole expense of the countess, and being designed chiefly for the benefit of Wales, was located at Talgarth, in the county of Brecon, and publicly opened, 24th of August, 1768, when the celebrated George Whitefield preached a sermon on the occasion. To perpetuate the institution beyond the life of the founder, a Voluntary Society was formed in 1787, to which she transferred the furniture and library. After the death of Lady Huntingdon, June 17th, 1791, the trustees removed the college to buildings which they purchased at Cheshunt, in Hertfordshire, fourteen miles from London. The new college was opened, August 24th, 1792, and an additional chapel, July 9th, 1806. What was the chapel is now the library. The books have greatly increased, chiefly by donations and bequests, and, in 1827, a valuable philosophical apparatus was added. In 1814, a second

tutor was appointed, and the course of study was improved, by dividing it into two distinct departments. The trustees, wishing to extend the benefits of the institution, and increase the comfort of the pupils, erected, in 1820, a substantial and spacious edifice, containing twenty apartments for students, a lecture room and dining hall, and other buildings suited to the important object. This expenditure, together with the deaths of many of the oldest friends of the college, compelled the trustees to draw upon the funds bequeathed by former benefactors, and to throw the institution to a great extent upon the subscriptions and donations of living friends.

As the college was founded by Lady Huntingdon, on the most catholic principles, to educate pious young men for preaching the gospel, without limiting them to any particular communion, the reader will not be surprised to learn, that, out of ninety students who have been educated, since the year 1818, eleven have entered the Establishment, and twenty-nine have joined other denominations of Dissenters than that by which they were educated; but most of them have become Congregationalists. These facts give the Cheshunt College a claim on various communions.

The number of students is, at present, sixteen, and the term of study is four years. Nearly two hundred and seventy have gone from Cheshunt. The Rev. Jacob Kirkman Foster, who resides at the institution, removed from Rochdale, in Lancashire, in the year 1826, to become classical tutor. The Rev. William Broadfoot, being compelled by illness to resign the charge of a Scotch Presbyterian congregation in London,

succeeded Mr. Kemp, in 1832, as theological tutor at Cheshunt. This excellent minister, beloved by the wise and good of all parties, was removed by death, in 1837. In the early part of the following year, the Rev. John Harris, of Epsom, accepted the invitation of the trustees, to take the theological chair, and the Rev. John Sortain, of Brighton, engaged to devote six weeks, twice in the year, to lecture on mathematics, logic, and belles lettres.

The course of study comprises the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages ; mathematics, history and geography ; theology, systematic and expository, with the composition of sermons ; ecclesiastical history, and the philosophy of the mind.

For this, like many of the dissenting seminaries, has considerably enlarged its original course, and thus increased the benefits it confers.

The Evangelical Institution at Newport Pagnel.

The singularly liberal foundation on which this seminary was placed, has not been found to produce any practical evils or difficulties ; but while independency preponderates, ministers are educated here for the service of Christ in different denominations. Mr. Samuel Greatheed, who had studied under Mr. Bull, the first tutor, had been appointed assistant tutor, in 1786 ; but he afterwards took the charge of the Independent church, Woburn, Bedfordshire, and Mr. Bull's son succeeded to the assistant tutorship, which he held till the death of his father. This venerable man was born in Northamptonshire, December 21st, 1738, and was educated at Bedford, where he studied Greek,

under Mr. Belsham. Having joined the Congregational church, Mr. Bull entered the academy at Daventry, in 1760, when Dr. Caleb Ashworth, the successor of Doddridge, was the tutor. Mr. Bull became pastor of the church at Newport Pagnel when it was in a low state, and before he died, enjoyed the pleasure of seeing it increased nearly tenfold.

He was honoured with the friendship of some of the most distinguished Christians of his day. The poet Cowper, who used to call him Charissime Taurorum, addressed to him some beautiful poems, and Mr. Newton selected him as the object of his Cardiphonia. Mr. Thornton, the philanthropist, gave the most substantial proofs of his high regard for Mr. Bull, of whom Cowper said, "He is a Dissenter, but a liberal one, a man of letters, and of genius; master of a fine imagination, or rather not master of it, an imagination which, when he finds himself in the company he loves, runs away with him into such fields of speculation as amuse and enliven every other imagination. At other times, he has a tender and delicate melancholy not less agreeable in its way." His memory was extraordinary, which his zeal for the acquisition of knowledge taxed with surprising tasks. In his youth he learned, by the letters which marked the divisions of the 119th psalm in his Bible, the Hebrew language, without the aid of a master, or grammar, or lexicon, and made such progress in that tongue as to compose a new translation of the psalms in a dramatic form. On the 23rd of July, 1814, in the seventy-sixth year of his age, and the fiftieth of

his ministry, he closed his useful life in holy peace and joy.

The seminary for the ministry, of which Mr. Thornton had taken the whole expense upon himself, was endowed by him with £200 per annum, as long as Mr. Bull should continue to be the tutor; but, on his death, the friends of religion in Bedfordshire and London determined to support it by subscription. The number of students being eight, the institution has a domestic character highly favourable to personal piety. Mr. Thomas Palmer Bull, who succeeded to his father in the care both of the church and the academy, is assisted by his son, the Rev. Josiah Bull, A.M. The course of study includes four years, devoted to the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages, divinity, and the cognate sciences. The Christian ministry has thus been supplied with upwards of seventy useful pastors, and the usual number is now enjoying the benefits of the institution. The funds are derived from annual subscriptions, congregational collections, and legacies, the friends of religion in Bedfordshire and in London being the chief contributors.

Gosport Academy and Missionary Seminary.

The institution to which the munificence of Mr. Welch of London gave rise, by placing a few young men under the tuition of the Rev. David Bogue, A.M., at Gosport, never ceased to educate ministers for the care of the churches at home, though it became, at last, chiefly distinguished by its missionary character. The death of its founder threw the seminary upon

the liberality of the public, which was stimulated to greater efforts, by an offer from Robert Haldane, Esq., of Edinburgh, to give ten pounds per annum towards the support of each of ten additional students, the remaining sum required being subscribed by the churches in Hampshire.

But when the Missionary Society determined to educate its missionaries under Dr. Bogue, these became the majority, and gave a new character to the institution. Dr. Bogue was, after some years, assisted by his son David, who had studied at the universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh. He filled the office of classical tutor with great credit, till he retired to study for the bar, soon after which he died. He was succeeded by the Rev. Theophilus Eastman, of Fareham, till the institution was removed, on the death of Dr. Bogue, in 1825.

This valuable man was born in the parish of Coldingham, Berwickshire, February 18, 1750. His ancestors were confessors for the truth, and his parents sent him, at the age of twelve, to study for the ministry, in the university of Edinburgh, where he spent nine years. Having taken his degree, he removed in 1771, and was licensed to preach in the church of Scotland, expecting to be presented to the living of Coldingham. But the disputes about patronage, in which his father sternly contended for the principles of the Scotch covenanters, excluded the son from this preferment, and led him to that which was far higher. He came to London, in 1772, and preached his first sermon in the pulpit of Mr. Muir, a Scotch minister, in Wapping. He afterwards as-

sisted the Rev. Mr. Smith in his school and congregation at Camberwell, and in a lecture at Silver Street, London. Having been invited to take the charge of the Scotch church, at Amsterdam, he visited Holland in 1776; but, dissatisfied with the prospect of usefulness, he declined the offer. In the following year he succeeded Mr. Watson, who quitted the charge of the dissenting church at Gosport, Hants, to study for the bar, and went out to India, as Sir James Watson, to succeed Sir William Jones. George Welch, Esq., of London, induced Dr. Bogue to undertake, some time after his settlement at Gosport, the education of young men for the ministry. The Missionary Society having been formed with his zealous concurrence, he preached at its first anniversary, and the conversion of the heathen world from that time so engrossed his heart, that it would require a volume to record his labours in the great cause. He educated a large number of the missionaries who have devoted their lives to the conversion of the world. At a missionary meeting in Brighton he died, October 25, 1825, in his seventy-sixth year.

The character of Dr. Bogue forms a study for his species. His mind fastened with instinctive eagerness on whatever was essential to solid usefulness. As a preacher and author he was plain, simple, and grave, dwelling on evangelical truth with a tone of earnestness that always awakened the conscience. His first printed sermon, in 1788, was on the importance of right sentiments in religion, in opposition to the Socinian tenet, the harmlessness of mental error, which was then obtruded on the public. A vigorous and

convincing pamphlet in favour of the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, which followed, in 1790, displayed that love of liberty which, next to his zeal for the diffusion of the gospel, was his ruling passion. A sermon preached before the Society for Promoting Religious Knowledge in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, contains the germ of that missionary spirit by which he was so honourably distinguished. At the request of the Missionary Society, he wrote an essay on the divine authority of the New Testament, which was designed to be an introduction to an edition of the Christian Scriptures in French. The essay has been translated into French, Italian, Spanish, and German, and a French copy was in the possession of Napoleon Buonaparte at the time of his death. Dr. Bogue's last publication was a volume of sermons on the millenium, which have the rare merit of rendering that theme practically useful.

Dr. Ebenezer Henderson was invited by the Missionary Society to go to Gosport, in order to carry on the business of the seminary, which was, soon after, removed to the premises vacated by Hoxton Academy. The Mission College was opened, in 1826, but was soon dissolved, and the missionaries have been, ever since, educated at the various dissenting colleges, for which they have been prepared by the Rev. Richard Cecil, of Turvey, Bedfordshire, who has now removed to Ongar, in Essex.

The county of Hants made an effort to preserve an academy at Gosport, under Mr. Carruthers, Dr. Bogue's successor; but his health failed, and the seminary was finally relinquished.

Rotherham College.

In the year 1808, this seminary was under the care of Dr. Edward Williams, as resident and theological tutor. He died on the 9th of March, 1813, in the sixty-fourth year of his age. He was born near Denbigh, in North Wales, and his father intended him for what is called the church; though his religious education was far from being what the Christian ministry demands. He was sent to a school at St. Asaph's, whence many were transferred to the universities. But, when he saw his school-fellows, at whose impieties he had been shocked, clothed with robes emblematical of innocence, and chanting with solemn pomp the praises of God, he conceived a disgust, which terminated in his quitting the establishment. Returning home, he was impressed with a deep sense of the terrors and grace of the Divine Majesty, but was far from all help in the paths of religion. "In the whole parish," he says, "there was not one family that maintained the worship of God, that of the minister not excepted." The reflections that young Williams heard thrown out against him, as a Methodist, led him to seek for that people, whom he concluded he should find possessed of the religion which he longed to know.

About this time, Mr. Daniel Rowlands, a preacher in the connexion of Mr. Whitefield, or the Calvinistic Methodists, came on one of his extensive itinerant tours, into those parts, and, by hearing him preach, Edward Williams was cut to the heart. But on his return to his paternal abode, he was, for the crime of

going after the Methodists, literally shut out of doors. His father having relented, Edward Williams was placed under the instructions of a clergyman, to prepare for orders in the establishment, to which he was not, at this time, entirely averse. But, going to St. Asaph's, to witness an ordination, he was overtaken by some persons who profanely swore that they should be too late; and on entering into the cathedral, he found these men were to be ordained. This scene led him to examine again the question of conformity, and, from this time, he became a confirmed Dissenter.

He entered the seminary for the education of dissenting ministers, at Abergavenny, over which the excellent Dr. Davis presided. Here the force of Edward Williams' mind was developed; for he entered deeply into all the doctrines of theology, betraying, at one time, a tendency towards Sandemanianism, or Mysticism, from which, however, he recovered with a singular display of decision and purity of character.

His first pastoral charge was at Ross, in Herefordshire, from which he removed to Oswestry, where he was appointed theological tutor, first to students supported by the pious Lady Glenorchy, and then to those whom Dr. Davis had taught, under the patronage of the Congregational Fund Board, in London. He resigned this office in 1787, in consequence of domestic afflictions and declining health. He was afterwards invited to take the superintendence of the Dissenting Theological Academy at Mile End, near London, but declined, in order to accept a call to the pastoral office in Birmingham, on which he entered, January 1, 1792. His flock was small but intelligent,

and deeply sensible of his superior worth; and while here, he received the diploma of D.D. from the university of Edinburgh.

He was called, in 1795, to preside over the Rotherham College, and to take the pastoral care of the adjoining congregation, at Masborough, from which Mr. Grove, one of the famous six students who had been expelled from Oxford for praying and preaching irregularly, had recently removed to Walsal. Dr. Williams was assisted in the classical department at Rotherham, first by the Rev. Maurice Philips; and then by a former pupil, the Rev. Joseph Gilbert, who published the valuable memoirs of his life. Mr. Gilbert held, at the same time, the pastoral office over the church at the Nether Chapel, Sheffield. Dr. Williams was now in his proper sphere, which he filled with great satisfaction to his pupils, and high advantage to the church of Christ. If he erred, it was by attempting too much; for his vigorous and ardent mind engaged largely in the labours of the press. He acquired great celebrity by his controversy on Baptism, with that excellent Baptist minister, Mr. Abraham Booth. This was no vulgar logomachy; for Dr. Williams entered into the *rationale* of the question, by a very luminous and instructive display of the whole doctrine of positive institutions. His letters to Priestley, and Levi, and Belsham, exhibit a delightful combination of the acute philosophical thinker with the holy man of God. A sermon which he preached and published on "Predestination to Life," developed the germ of his "Essay on Equity and Sovereignty," and gave rise to a controversy which will demand notice

in a following chapter. To the Refutation of Calvinism by Dr. Tomline, prelate of Lincoln, he published an answer, entitled "A Defence of Modern Calvinism." His abridgment of Owen on the Hebrews was not equally useful with his editions of the works of Doddridge and President Edwards, which he enriched with very valuable notes; for he illuminated every subject he touched. As a preacher, he was too slow and inanimate to be popular with the multitude; though he always interested those who could duly appreciate purity of motive and profound thinking. For personal sanctity and theological eminence, Dr. Williams was a lively image of the celebrated President Edwards.

He was succeeded, in September, 1813, both in the college and the congregation, by James Bennett, who removed from the pastoral care of an Independent church at Romsey, in Hampshire. The buildings of the institution were, soon after, enlarged and improved, at a cost considerably greater than that of the original erection. Joshua Walker, Esq., of Clifton, near Rotherham, treasurer to the college, made a gift of the premises, which had been held upon lease. The adjoining house, which his father, the late Samuel Walker, Esq., of Masborough, had erected for the minister of the congregation, was purchased for the resident tutor, and the college was made capable of containing more than twenty students, with a separate study and bed-room for each. The library and philosophical apparatus were enriched by the liberality of Joseph and Thomas Walker, Esqrs., sons of Samuel

Walker, who had erected the spacious adjoining chapel, and given it to the congregation.

In the year 1818, the institution was deprived of the valuable services of Mr. Gilbert, as classical and mathematical tutor, by his removal to take the charge of a congregation at Hull, from which Mr. Lambert had been called by a death that filled all classes in that large town with mourning. Mr. Gilbert was succeeded in his office at the college, and at the Nether Chapel, Sheffield, by the Rev. Thomas Smith, A.M., who had removed from Lancashire, and whose diligent and able services the institution still enjoys.

Towards the end of the year 1828, declining health induced the writer of this history to resign the chair of theology and oriental languages in the college, as well as the pastoral care of the congregation at Masborough, and to remove to take the charge of the congregation in Silver Street, London, where the celebrated John Howe had formerly preached.

The Rev. Clement Perrot was then invited, in 1829, from the island of Guernsey, to preside over the college and the congregation. When he resigned, in 1834, he was succeeded by the Rev. William Hendry Stowell, from North Shields, who entered, in July, 1834, on the double duties which he ably performs.

The period of education here is four years. The course comprises Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Chaldee, and Syriac; mathematics, systematic theology, logic, mental and moral philosophy, rhetoric, elocution, ecclesiastical history, and the composition of sermons. The students preach in the adjacent villages and towns.

The college has lately received some endowment,

from the bequest of the late Rev. Mr. Pickersgill, who was educated at the institution, when it was under the care of Mr. Scott, at Heckmondwike. The number of students has of late years been under twenty; but two hundred ministers have gone forth from Rotherham into various counties of England, Scotland, and Wales, into Canada and the United States of America. One is presiding with great celebrity over the Old College at Homerton, and another is professor of logic and mental philosophy in University College, London.

Airedale College, formerly Idle Academy.

After this institution had existed thirty-three years, it was removed from Idle to Undercliffe, in the vicinity of Bradford, Yorkshire, Mrs. Bacon, of that place, having given two estates, one of which was to form the site of the new college, and the other to furnish an annual addition to its income. The first stone of a handsome edifice, capable of accommodating a tutor and twenty students, was laid, June 20, 1831.

The next year, however, Mr. Vint became too ill to sustain any longer the arduous duties he had long discharged, and on the 13th of March, 1833, he entered into rest. The esteem in which he had been held by Mr. Hanson of London, induced him to endow this institution with the funds requisite for the support of two students, and Mr. Vint's influence with other friends obtained the means of maintaining two more. The usefulness of the seminary continually augmented its patronage, till that which begun on a small scale, has become one of the most important institutions in the north of England. There were, in 1828, eighteen

young men studying for the ministry at Idle, and during the course of thirty-four years, Mr. Vint conducted the studies of about ninety ministers.

The Rev. Walter Scott, of Rowell, in Northamptonshire, who had been employed in preparing young men for Hoxton College, and for the ministry, was chosen to be the theological tutor at Airedale. He entered on this office in March, 1834, and was the first who occupied the new premises. The Rev. Thomas Rawson Taylor, who had studied under Mr. Vint, and, for a short time, assisted him, was chosen to be the classical and mathematical tutor. But this excellent young man was, on the 7th of March, in the following year, removed by death from the institution he was so well fitted to serve, and to which he bequeathed his library. His office was filled by Rev. W. B. Clulow, from Sheldon, in Devonshire.

In 1836, it was announced to the assembled friends of the institution, that the debt which had been incurred, on account of the building, was liquidated, and that considerable progress was made, by the donations of books, towards forming a library adequate to the wants of such a seminary. The period of study, which is four years, is occupied with mathematics, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, to which are added the Chaldee and Syriac, systematic theology, ecclesiastical history, biblical criticism, and moral philosophy.

Theological Seminary at Blackburn.

Nearly half a century has elapsed since the first attempt was made to form an Academy for Dissenting Ministers in this part of Lancashire. George Welch,

Esq., of London, who founded the institution at Gosport, supported a few students, who were educated by Rev. James Macquhae, pastor of the Independent church at Blackburn. But the history of this institution was short, and not more than three or four ministers were educated here, when the attempt was abandoned. The present seminary at Blackburn, may be considered as arising out of another at Manchester; for from the year 1802, Robert Spear, Esq., of that town, supported an academical institution there, for some years. The Rev. William Roby, the pastor of the Independent congregation in Grosvenor Street, was appointed tutor. The course of education was not extensive; but Mr. Roby's ability and zeal rendered him an eminent blessing, and eighteen laborious and successful ministers went forth from this institution.

Other friends of religion and learning in Manchester projected, in the year 1809, a Dissenting Grammar School, on the plan of one which had been recently established at Mill Hill, near London. The Lancashire institution was placed at New Windsor, near Manchester, and the profits which were expected to arise, were destined to the support of a theological department, separate in its domestic arrangements, and under its own divinity tutor; but the master of the school was to teach the classics to the students. The Rev. George Philips was the first classical tutor. At his death, he was succeeded by the Rev. John Reynolds, who afterwards took the charge of a church at Chester. The theological department, which is the proper subject of these pages, was filled by the Rev. Jenkin Lewis, who had been, for several years, the tutor of the dis-

senting seminary at Wrexham, in North Wales, having succeeded Dr. Edward Williams in that office. Several students were educated while this complex plan was in operation; but it can excite no surprise that it was neither successful nor durable. The theological institution was abandoned, and the classical school became the private property of the Rev. Dr. Clunie.

The increase of Independent churches in Lancashire, and the difficulty of obtaining preachers, afterwards induced the members of the County Union to provide another seminary for the ministry. It was at length determined to form the present academy, at Blackburn, where the Rev. Joseph Fletcher, A. M. was pastor of the Independent church. He was appointed theological tutor, in 1816, and the Rev. William Hope classical tutor. The latter was succeeded by Mr. Howle, and, on his resignation, the Rev. Gilbert Wardlaw was appointed to the office. But in 1822 the institution was deprived of the valuable services of its theological tutor. His health failing, under his double duties, he accepted an invitation to the pastoral care of the church originally raised by the ministry of the celebrated Matthew Mead, at Stepney, near London.

Dr. Payne was invited, from Edinburgh, to fill the theological chair, and Mr. Wardlaw, the classical tutor, succeeded him in his pastoral care. The Rev. Ebenezer Miller became classical tutor at Blackburn. Dr. Payne resigned his office, in 1831, and became, afterwards, the president of a similar institution newly formed at Exeter. Mr. Wardlaw, the former classical teacher, was then invited to take the theological department, which he at present fills. Mr. William

Alexander, who had been chosen classical tutor, having left Blackburn, was succeeded by Mr. Daniel Burgess Hayward, who still occupies that post in the institution in which he was educated.

There are, at present, about twelve students at Blackburn. The course of education comprises theology, and biblical criticism, with ecclesiastical history, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. The support of the institution is chiefly derived from subscriptions and collections in the Congregational churches of Lancashire; but it has been much indebted to the liberality of its first treasurer, the late Roger Cunliffe, Esq., of Blackburn, who provided by his will, that one hundred pounds should be annually applied from his estate, towards the support of the seminary, so long as it should continue at Blackburn. Having seen the good effects of the institution by the preaching of the students in the neighbourhood, the donor was anxious to be the means of perpetuating that blessing where he knew it was so much needed.

The Western Academy, Exeter.

At the close of the former period of this history, Mr. James Small, minister of Axminster, being the tutor of this seminary, it was located in that town. For thirty-two years, he discharged the double duties of pastor and teacher; but he resigned his tutorship in 1829, and was removed by death from all his labours, on the 22d of January, 1834, in the seventy-fifth year of his age. He was modest and retiring, but eminently devotional, and a hard student, rising very early, and pursuing mathematical researches to an

advanced age. As he preached three times a day, and took the sole charge of the academy, it is manifest that he must have been "in labours more abundant;" but it was not without reason that his friends regretted his refusal to accept the aid of another tutor.

The number of students under Mr. Small, was, however, very limited, but they were men of piety and evangelical sentiments, and have contributed powerfully to rescue dissent, in the West of England, from the desolating effects of the Arian and Socinian creeds. The Congregational Fund Board was induced, by financial considerations, to withdraw its support, when the committee of the academy, anxious, not only to maintain its existence, but to increase its efficiency, by providing two tutors, published, in 1827, an appeal to the public. "It now remains," they say, "for one hundred Independent churches of the four western counties, to determine whether an institution which has been a blessing, and which, with the contemplated advantages, may become a still greater blessing, shall utterly fail, or rise, with an accession of strength and efficiency."

This appeal was not in vain. Many Dissenters came forward to place the academy on a permanent footing of increased usefulness, and after some preliminary meetings, one was held at Exeter, November, 19th, 1828, when it was resolved to remove the institution to Exeter. Dr. George Payne, who had presided over the Blackburn academy, became the resident and theological tutor, and Mr. Pope, who had studied under him, and who is minister of a congregation at Heavitree, near Exeter, is the classical tutor.

The institution which was nearly extinct, as there was only one student under the temporary care of Mr. Rooker, of Biddeford, is now revived. Under the new administration it commenced with five, and soon numbered twelve students. It has some small property, but not amounting to a hundred pounds of annual income. The Congregational Fund Board in London, which had withdrawn its support, determined, in 1837, to maintain four students in the western academy; leaving all the other expenses to be provided for by voluntary contributions.

Six years ago, a commodious building, beautifully situated in the vicinity of Exeter, capable of accommodating the academic family, and eight students, was purchased by the committee. The debt thus incurred, has been liquidated by the persevering and meritorious exertions of its treasurer, William Collard, Esq., of Wellington. It was found necessary, about twelve months ago, to enlarge the building so as to accommodate fourteen students, and this has entailed upon it a debt of four or five hundred pounds, which presses heavily upon the institution. It has now, however, very commodious and most delightful, as well as very healthy premises. The course of study, which is for five years, comprehends the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages, general history, mathematics, natural philosophy, logic, general grammar, rhetoric, mental and moral science, theology, biblical criticism, and ecclesiastical history.

Manchester College, York.

This, which is the only college for the Unitarians, has experienced so little alteration during the last thirty years, that it is not necessary to say more than that Mr. Wellbeloved still presides over it, and that the Rev. John Kenrick, having been compelled, by loss of sight, to resign the office of classical tutor, has been succeeded, in the last year, by Dr. Perry. The Rev. James Turner was mathematical tutor, but since the year 1829, the Rev. J. Hincks fills that post.

The average number of students is about eighteen, and some of the funds have been derived from the neighbourhood of Manchester, where the institution received its origin. But Lady Hewley's charity had been made very subservient to the interests of this seminary, which has been deprived of that resource, since the Chancellor decreed that the proceeds of her estate should be paid into the Court of Chancery, until the suit that is now carried on shall be finally decided.

Spring-hill College, Birmingham.

This new college had its rise in the Christian liberality of the late George Storer Mansfield, Esq., and his sisters, Mrs. Sarah Glover, and Miss Elizabeth Mansfield; and it depends for its support, partly upon funds which have been placed in trust by them, and partly upon voluntary subscriptions.

On this principle it recognises a committee selected annually, at a general meeting of subscribers to the above-mentioned object, as constituting the body in

whom the administration of the trust funds, as well as of the associate subscription fund, shall be permanently vested. It is expressly provided in the deed of trust, that "No person shall, at any time, be deemed eligible to be a member of the committee, unless he profess and declare, by writing under his hand, that he believes in the unity of the Godhead,—the divinity of Christ,—the atonement made by his death for sin,—the divinity and personality of the Holy Spirit,—the necessity of the Spirit's influence for the illumination of the understanding and the renovation of the heart,—and the plenary inspiration of the Holy Scriptures."

The committee thus appointed, are empowered to frame the necessary rules and regulations for managing and conducting the affairs of the college; and also to pass such bye-laws as they shall, from time to time, deem necessary for its government and welfare; but every such bye-law must be reviewed at the next ensuing meeting of the trustees and subscribers, and no rule or bye-law may at any time be made, which militates against any of the provisions of the trust deed. The committee is also charged with the appointment and removal of tutors, when necessary, and the admission and dismissal of students.

The trustees, tutors, and students, who are appointed or received in pursuance of the trust provisions, are required, in addition to the declaration made by members of the committee, to profess themselves Dissenters from the Established Church and Pædobaptists, and in the event of any suspicion arising that the aforesaid declaration has ceased to represent the

actual principles of any trustee, tutor, or student, he may be required to renew it; if a trustee, on the application of one-third of his co-trustees; if a tutor or student, on the application of the committee or any three trustees.

At the express desire of Mrs. Glover and Miss Mansfield, the surviving founders, the trustees have, for a considerable time, been occupied with arrangements preparatory to the establishment of the college; and aided by a very munificent sacrifice on the part of those ladies, of a portion of their reserved income, the institution was opened for the reception of students, at the end of August, 1838; a period anticipating, probably by several years, that originally contemplated.

OFFICE BEARERS IN THE EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT.

Chairman of the Board of Education.

The Rev. J. A. James, Birmingham.

Visitors and Examiners.

The Rev. R. S. M'All, LL.D., Manchester.
The Rev. George Redford, D.D. LL.D., Worcester.
The Rev. John Burder, M.A., Stroud.
The Rev. J. Gawthorn, Derby.
The Rev. Joseph Gilbert, Nottingham.

Tutors.

The Rev. Francis Watts, Professor of Christian Theology, Church History, and Pastoral Science.

The Rev. T. R. Barker, Professor of Biblical and Classical Philology, and Resident Tutor.

In the department of Philosophy the appointment is not yet made.

Honorary Secretary.

The Rev. John Hammond, Handsworth, near Birmingham.

Members of the Educational Board.

The Rev. Benjamin Brook, Birmingham.
The Rev. James Dawson, Dudley.
The Rev. Timothy East, Birmingham.
The Rev. J. G. Gallaway, M.A., West Bromwich.
The Rev. John Hill, Gornal.
The Rev. John Jones, Birmingham.
The Rev. James Mattheson, D.D., Wolverhampton.
The Rev. R. M. Miller, Atherstone.
The Rev. Robert Ross, M.D., Kidderminster.
The Rev. John Sibree, Coventry.

A theological course of four years will constitute the proper academical curriculum, whose completion will be indispensable to a student's honourable dismission from the college, and which it will be their sincere desire to render comprehensive in its outline, biblical and scientific in its source and evidences, practical in its bearings on ministerial labour, and liberal, devout, and conscientious in its spirit. To this curriculum no student will be admitted, except under very special circumstances, who has not completed his 18th year, or is unable to pass a creditable examination in the elements of the Hebrew language,—a few select authors of Greek and Roman literature,—ancient Geography and History, both sacred and profane,—and the principles of mathematical and intellectual Philosophy.

That, along with this provision for prepared students, due assistance may be rendered to young men who have not enjoyed the same previous advantages,

and especially considering, that through the deep conviction which prevails in the Congregational churches, that none but such as are hopefully pious should be countenanced in contemplating the Christian ministry, youths whose talents and character afterwards become very promising, are frequently, before the development of them, apprenticed to some secular pursuit, incompatible with general mental cultivation, it has been determined by the board, to establish an initiatory course of philological and philosophcal training, which shall occupy from one to three sessions, as circumstances may require. Into this, young men of piety, suitably recommended, may be admitted in their seventeenth year, provided they can read the Æneid of Virgil, and are acquainted with the rudiments of the Greek language.

The business of education will, in both courses, be conducted through the medium of lectures, exercises, and examinations.

"In the THEOLOGICAL CURRICULUM Lectures will be delivered in the four branches of exegetical, synthetical, historical, and pastoral theology, in the following order:—

I.—In EXEGETICAL THEOLOGY, four Lectures will be delivered weekly, on the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, the original text being the basis of the Lecture.

During the first Session of the course, on the Pentateuch and the Epistle to the Hebrews.

During the second Session, on Select portions of the Historical Books.

During the third Session, on the Prophetical or Oracular portions of the Old and New Testaments.

During the fourth Session, on the Doctrinal, Ethical, and Experimental portions of Scripture.

II.—In Synthetical Theology, three Lectures will be delivered weekly; the matter of the course being distributed into four principal parts, of which each will occupy, as follows, an annual Session; these are,

1st. A comprehensive introduction to Revealed Theology. This will embrace, in addition to the positive evidences, external and internal, in favour of divine Revelation, a digest of the principal facts of Natural Theology, and a critical analysis of them in reference, on the one hand, to their independent sufficiency as alleged by the Deist, and, on the other, to the question of their corroborative testimony to the divine authority of the Old and New Testament Scriptures.

2ndly. Christian Dogmatics; a digest of Christian doctrine in reference to the Deity, his nature, counsels and operations in creation, providence, and grace.

3rdly. Christian Ethics; a digest of the laws of Christ in their most comprehensive obligation.

4thly. Comparative Theology; comprising summaries of the doctrinal systems developed by the controversial writings of the Fathers, Heresiarchs, and Schoolmen, and embodied in Ecclesiastical Creeds and Confessions, and a comparison of them with each other and the Holy Scriptures.

III.—The Historical Course, in which two or three Lectures will be delivered weekly, includes in four sections, of which the first will occupy two, the others one session each,

1st. The History of the Christian Church, from its commencement to the present times.

2ndly. A Special History of Protestant Missions.

3rdly. A course on Ecclesiastical Antiquities, unfolding the inventions and corruptions of men in the positive institutions of Christianity, with their causes and effects.

IV.—In the course on Pastoral Science, which will be comprised in one weekly Lecture:—

The first annual Session will contain a general survey of the whole course of pastoral qualification and duty.

The second, will illustrate pastoral didactics, or the duties, qualifications, and preparation connected with the office of public instruction specially considered.

The third, pastoral liturgies, or the duties, qualifications, and preparation connected with the social and public worship of God, specially considered.

The fourth, Church Government, illustrated on the same plan.

The exercises connected with the above-mentioned Lectures, are as follows :—

1. In the department of exegetical theology, the students will be exercised twice a week by the philological tutor, in translating and expounding a portion of the Old and New Testaments in the original languages. These exercises will occasionally be required in writing.

2. The exercises in the synthetical department, will consist of two hours' repetition by the students, as they may be severally called upon by the tutor, of the principal matter of the three synthetical lectures of the preceding week. These repetitions to be delivered from the notes taken at lecture, amplified by the references given with them.

3. In the historical branch, an occasional written exercise to be examined by the tutor, or read at a monthly meeting of the board of education, will probably be all that the other engagements of the students will allow.

4. In practical theology, two hours a week will be devoted to exercises. On these occasions a student will be called upon to read a sermon on some prescribed subject, which will be followed by the tutor's remarks, and plans of sermons will then be asked for, till three shall have been read and discussed.

In addition to the exercises which stand in immediate connexion with the theological lectures, the students will be occupied three times a week in reading, with the philological tutor, portions of those Greek authors, whose style illustrates the formation and character of the New Testament Greek, and some of the most valuable portions of the Greek and Latin fathers.

The visitors and examiners of the College will, as before stated, in connexion with the tutors and the Board of Education, appoint two examinations in each year, one immediately preceding the recess at Christmas, the other at the termination of each session.

The INITIATORY COURSE will comprehend a series of lec-

tures, exercises and examinations, in Philology and intellectual science.

The Philological Lectures will be comprised in a double series, illustrating in alternate sessions, the geography, physical and political, the general history, the antiquities, domestic, civil and religious, the language and the literature of the Hebrew and Gentile races. In the classical series the illustration of religious Antiquities will require a survey of the heathen mythology; and under the heads of language and literature, in both series, it is intended to give a summary of grammatical, critical and hermeneutical principles, and by occasional exegetical analyses of select passages of sacred and profane antiquity, to furnish sufficient special introductions to the style and spirit of the authors included in the sketch, and exemplary hints to students of the proper methods of investigating and explaining them.

The students will, during the whole of the initiatory course, be engaged with the philological tutor, five days of every week, in exercises on the elements of Hebrew, in reading classical authors, and in writing translations into Hebrew, Greek, and Latin.

The branches of philosophical instruction included in the course, are Mathematics, the elements of Mental Science, Logic, Rhetoric, the history of Philosophy, and that of modern European literature. The philosophical tutor will also prescribe and correct the exercises of the students in English Composition, but no particular details respecting this course can be furnished until the arrangements for filling the chair shall have been brought to completion.

The Committee respectfully direct the attention of ministers and churches, as well as of young men disposed to apply for admission into the College, to the following rules which have been framed by the Board of Education in reference to the admission of students.

1. Every candidate for admission into Spring-hill College, whether applying to be received on the foundation, or at his own charge, must state distinctly whether he applies for the theological curriculum only, or for the initiatory course also; must forward with his application a statement of his reasons for desiring to be received, accompanied with a sealed letter of recommendation from his pastor, seconded by such other respectable recommendations of christian friends, also sealed, as he may be able to obtain; and if

he apply for the theological curriculum only, must particularly specify what previous advantages of education he has enjoyed, and what classical and philosophical authors he has read.

It is particularly requested that every recommendation of a candidate may be conscientiously explicit respecting his piety, talents, disposition, temper, habits, and previous occupation and attainments; as in every instance of deficient information, the board will deem it necessary to request of the recommending parties, distinct answers to a series of printed questions to the following effect, accompanied by such other questions as the particular case may seem to require.

1. Is the candidate in your judgment a young man of serious and fervent piety?

2. Is his character without reproach?

3. Is he amiable in his disposition, temper and deportment, or in case of constitutional infirmity in this respect, has he shown a conscientious desire to correct what is amiss?

4. Has he manifested, for how long, and in what way, an interest in the increase of Christ's kingdom, a personal devotedness to the cause of Christ, and a concern for the instruction of the ignorant and the salvation of souls? If he have been engaged in the distribution of tracts, or sabbath school instruction, are you able to furnish any accurate information respecting the acceptableness of his visits to the poor, or his influence upon the teachers and children of the school? or can you say anything respecting the character, for disinterestedness and constancy, of his efforts to do good?

5. Are his general talents, aptitude for learning, and inclination for study such as justify the hope that his engaging in theological pursuits will be attended with satisfactory results in reference to the work of the Christian ministry?

6. Has he contracted any habits unsuitable to the character which, as a Student of Theology and aspirant to the Christian ministry, he will be required to maintain?"

Stepney College, Baptist.

This is a new institution, having been founded in the year 1810. It originated, however, in a society

that was formed six years before, called the Baptist Education Society, of which the venerable Abraham Booth was a zealous promoter. It afforded instruction, during a course of two years, to several young men, not in the learned languages, or the higher departments of knowledge, but in English grammar and composition, and in theology, by a course of reading of the best English divines. Several excellent men, who are still labouring in the gospel, have thus received valuable aids.

But these humbler institutions have usually given birth to others more efficient; and, in the year 1810, the present college was founded, to give an education which extends through four years, and embraces all the most important objects with which a minister should be acquainted. Its theological basis is the same as was laid down for the former institution, of which the rules were preserved, as far as they could be adapted to a more important seminary. The late W. Taylor, Esq., who was, for many years, a deacon of the church of which Mr. Booth was pastor, purchased the present premises, and generously gave to the college what cost him three thousand six hundred pounds. It was a building frequently called King John's palace, and supposed by many to have been the residence of that monarch. But more correct judges assign the erection to the close of Elizabeth's reign, or the commencement of that of James I. What is called King John's tower is a noble gateway belonging to a mansion which, in the reign of Charles II., was the residence of the Marquis of Worcester. The antiquarian is interested in the singular beauty of the

brick-work and cement, which, indeed, attract the notice of every observant passenger. This has been, with much good taste, preserved, and a Baptist chapel has been erected on the right hand, in a correspondent style of architecture, with fine brick-work and stone facings. On the left hand is the house occupied by the theological tutor.

The prospectus of the new institution was written by Mr. Robert Hall, then at Leicester, and was well calculated to attract the favour of his own denomination, and the friends of religion in other communions. The Rev. Dr. Newman, pastor of a Baptist church at Bow, was appointed theological tutor, and Rev. S. Young was chosen to fill the chair of classics. Early in the year 1827, Dr. Newman resigned his office, which he had honourably held for sixteen years; and Mr. Young, who was appointed to succeed him, was, within a few weeks, snatched from the hopes of his friends, by death. In the spring of the same year, were appointed the present tutors, Rev. W. H. Murch, who resides on the premises and teaches theology, and Rev. S. Tomkins, A. M., who is the classical tutor.

The four years of study are occupied with Latin and Greek; and as the candidates for admission are required to read Virgil and the Greek Testament, those who have not reached that point are placed under a competent person for preparatory instruction. Hebrew, Chaldee, and Syriac are taught, as are also mathematics. Theology occupies the chief attention, and is accompanied by lectures on biblical criticism, the evidences of divine revelation, on the divine dis-

pensations, and pastoral theology. Mental and moral philosophy and rhetoric complete the course.

Shortly after the appointment of the present tutors, it was resolved to erect more suitable apartments for the students. A considerable part of the old premises was converted into bed-rooms, and the committee erected a dining-hall, library, and lecture room, and twenty-two studies, which, with the chapel, cost about four thousand pounds, and the public generosity furnished the whole while the buildings were in the course of erection. The number of students, during the last session, was twenty-five. Additional premises have been purchased, at a cost of eighteen hundred pounds, with a view to further enlargements. The adjoining chapel affords a desirable sphere for the early labours of the young men, who have there gathered a good congregation. Some of them go to finish their education at one of the northern universities, and a prize of £50 has lately been awarded by the Senatus Academicus of Edinburgh to one of the *alumni* of Stepney College.

Bristol Academy.

This ancient Baptist college was, in the year 1812, removed from North Street to Stokes Croft, where extensive and substantial buildings were erected, to accommodate the resident tutor and thirty-three students. Those who had known the valuable library and museum of the institution, were then happy to see them provided with a suitable edifice; for the library, which amounts to seven thousand volumes, contains, among other curiosities, the only entire copy

of Tyndale's edition of the New Testament, 1526, which escaped the flames; and the museum, which was founded by Dr. Gifford of the British Museum, has been enriched by the Baptist missionaries with many valuable articles.

In the year 1817, the Rev. Henry Page was succeeded, in the classical department, by the Rev. Thomas S. Crisp. In May, 1825, Dr. Ryland, who had long presided over the institution, and taught theology and Hebrew, was called home to his heavenly rest. He was the son of the Rev. John Collet Ryland, the celebrated Baptist minister of Warwick, who afterwards spent twenty-six years of vigorous, successful labour at Northampton. His son John was born at Warwick, January 29, 1753. Of Mr. Spence, the author of Polymetis, young Ryland, when a schoolboy, learned Hebrew, in which he read the 23d Psalm to Mr. Hervey, author of Theron and Aspasio, the friend of Mr. Ryland, senior. Like Doddridge, John Ryland was taught the Scripture history by his mother, from the Dutch tiles in the fire-place, and when repeating the answers in Dr. Watts' catechism on the misery of the wicked, he burst into tears. It was not, however, till he was thirteen that he was renewed by divine grace, and then showed that jealousy about the reality of his religion which distinguished him in future life, and which was nourished by reading the treatise on religious affections by President Edwards, whose works he most highly valued. He soon after devoted himself to the ministry, and having obtained the sanction of the church, he began preaching with such zeal, that he received a warning from Mr. Newton,

then curate of Olney, against "burning the candle at both ends." In 1781, when in his twenty-fifth year, he became assistant to his father in the pastoral office at Northampton, which, five years after, devolved entirely on him, as his father retired to Enfield, where he died. Mr. Ryland had some trouble, when sole pastor at Northampton, for refusing to admit Huntington into the pulpit; but that firebrand was always treated as he deserved by one who was too wise to bow to the arrogant pretender. For though the pastor of Northampton had commenced his ministry on what would be called high principles, he soon joined Mr. Carey and Mr. Fuller in adopting the more just views of the reformers and puritans, to which the study of Edwards on the Freedom of the Will contributed.

He contributed eminently to the formation of the Baptist Missionary Society, in 1792, and was ever after its most zealous friend. Dr. Caleb Evans having been called by death from the care of the Baptist church in Broadmead, Bristol, and the presidency of the academy for the ministry, Mr. Ryland, after twice refusing, succeeded to both offices, December 1793. His answer to the invitation of the Pædobaptist church, which is singularly combined with the Baptist, was beautifully expressive of the catholicism which reigned in Mr. Ryland's heart. In Bristol, he was the faithful witness for the truth, and the wise, kind, beloved friend of all good men; for he had nothing sectarian in his character. It was, indeed, with equal truth and beauty observed of him by Mr. Robert Hall, that his sensibility extended, not only to his own species, but pervaded the whole circle of animated

nature. After a healthful course, greatly promoted by early rising and temperance, he sickened, and, soon after, was allowed to enter into rest, May 25, 1825, in the seventy-third year of his age. His funeral sermon by Mr. Hall, his successor in the pastoral care, being published, contributed powerfully to give to a modest, retiring man, the honour that is his due. For he was one of the wisest and best of men, whom no good man could know without loving. His theological accuracy and catholic benevolence made him an eminent blessing to his own communion, if any communion but that of all saints can be said to be his, who loving the image of Christ, wherever he saw, it compelled all who valued it at all, to admire it in him. He was the correspondent of Dr. Erskine, of the Scotch establishment, and of Newton and Scott, in the English, and that man must have been a bigot indeed who would not have deemed himself honoured by the friendship of Dr. Ryland.

Mr. James, who had assisted in teaching the classics, being advanced in years, resigned, when the duties of Mr. Exley, the mathematical tutor, with the whole of the classical department, were committed to the Rev. William Anderson, from Dunstable. Mr. Crisp was chosen to succeed Dr. Ryland. In 1813 the institution suffered two losses; for Mr. Anderson was removed by death, and Rev. W. Pechy refused to hold the situation more than one year. Mr. Edgar Huxtable, from the University of Cambridge, was chosen classical and mathematical tutor, under whom both these departments of knowledge are pursued with great success, as are Hebrew and theology, in which

Dr. Ryland had laboured to impart to the rising ministry his own eminence.

Horton College, Bradford, Yorkshire, Baptist.

As this institution was but just formed when the History of Dissenters was published, it was then merely announced that the Rev. William Steadman had been chosen tutor.* He fully justified the expectations which all who knew him entertained of his usefulness in this office. The Northern Baptist Education Society, the patron of the institution, placed it at Little Horton, a village near Bradford, and, after some time, the tutor's house, and studies for twenty-three students, were rebuilt, by which two thousand pounds of funded property were expended; but their treasurer, J. Broadley, Esq., bequeathed to the college upwards of a hundred and sixty pounds per annum.

As the close of 1835, the Rev. William Steadman, who had hitherto presided over the institution, and had received from America the diploma of doctor of divinity, was induced, by the infirmities of years, to resign the charge, soon after which he was removed by death. He was born August 12, 1764, in the parish of Eardisland, near Leominster. His ancestors were Baptists, but friends to the Calvinistic Methodists. By an early affection of the eyes, which had been ill-managed, his sight was permanently injured, and his subsequent destination affected, not to his disadvantage, or that of the church of God. But he was, on account of his weak sight, suffered to grow up to

* Second Edition, Vol. II. p. 538.

the age of nine without learning to read; till, stung with shame, he applied himself to the task, and in a few months could read the Bible. At length he kept a school himself, and for six years was an assistant to Rev. John Thomas, the clergyman who presided over the free school at Eardisland.

Toward the close of his seventeenth year, the serious impressions which he had often received, and as often lost, terminated in a change of heart, which induced him to join, in April, 1784, the Baptist church at Leominster, under the pastoral care of Mr. Joshua Thomas, the father of Mr. Timothy Thomas, pastor of the Baptist church, Devonshire Square, London. This step did not diminish the kindness with which Mr. Steadman was treated by his clerical employer, who always afforded him substantial proofs of affection and esteem.

In that autobiography which forms a valuable portion of his Life, published by his son the Rev. Thomas Steadman, of Bradford, William Steadman observes, "From the commencement of my religious impressions, I had a predilection for the ministry." His fears that he should never become a preacher, he wisely suffered not to prevent his pursuing those studies that might fit him for the work, and he was rewarded by being soon invited to assist his pastor, who recommended him to the Baptist Academy at Bristol. There he studied, far too short a time, under Dr. Caleb Evans, when Mr. Robert Hall and Mr. James Newton were classical tutors, and Mr. Pearce, afterwards of Birmingham, was Mr. Steadman's fellow student and bosom friend. Broughton, a village in

Hampshire, was the first sphere of Mr. Steadman's labours, rendered pleasant by residing in the family of which Miss Steel, the celebrated Theodosia, was a member, and painful by the Hyper-calvinism of some, as well as the divergence of others into Sandemanianism. Here, however, he grew in grace and in knowledge, by studying the works of Dr. Owen and President Edwards, while, by very laborious itinerant excursions he sought to increase his usefulness.

But he was called, in 1798, to a larger and more fertile field; for he became fellow labourer with Mr. Josiah Birt, at Devonport, then called Plymouth Dock. After a time, a second church was formed, of which he became sole pastor. From thence, he was invited to become president of the new seminary at Little Horton, near Bradford, Yorkshire. He became, at the same period, pastor of the Baptist church, and laboured, as formerly, in the villages around him, till, worn out with toils, he died April 12, 1837, in the seventy-third year of his age.

The defect in his sight gave him an odd appearance, which, however, seemed to vanish, as soon as he spoke; for though Socrates would have advised him, as well as Plato, to sacrifice to the graces, he poured forth such stores of evangelical knowledge, with so much holy earnestness of manner, that the wisest and the best of men loved to sit at his feet and listen. The writer of these pages, who was happy in his friendship, first when we both resided in Hampshire, and afterwards when engaged in similar labours in Yorkshire, was once told by Dr. Ryland of Bristol, "I never was so disposed to become a Welch jumper, as

when I heard Mr. Steadman preach on the attributes of God glorified in our redemption by Christ." That this was his favourite theme was, perhaps, both the cause and the effect of his great delight in Owen's Treatise on the Glory of Christ, and Edwards' works, especially his Life of Brainerd. Dr. Steadman shared with Dr. Ryland in the honour of stemming the torrent of Ultra-calvinism in their own communion, which had been tainted, as well, by giving to Gill's works a deference which they do not deserve, and an application he never intended, as by countenancing the impudent dogmatism of some ignorant Antinomians.

But Dr. Steadman committed the usual fault of an ardent man, who "remembered that it was written of the Redeemer, the zeal of thy house hath eaten me up." He that had shared with Pearce in the desire to become a missionary in India, and had followed in the steps of the Methodist itinerant labourers through Cornwall, persisted to the last in attempting too much. He should have contented himself, when president of a college, with preaching twice a day in Bradford, and left village labours to younger men; but that he took the care of procuring pecuniary supplies for the seminary, was in him a folly, and in those who suffered it a sin. Yet he lived to a good old age, and his disinterestedness was rewarded, at the close of life, by a generous friend. The office of classical tutor was filled, in 1818, by Mr. Jonathan Ryland, son of Dr. Ryland, of Bristol; but, in 1822, he was succeeded by the Rev. B. Godwin, pastor of the second Baptist church at Bradford, who, in about ten years, resigned the office. His successor was Mr. William Fawcett,

grandson of Dr. Fawcett, of Ewood Hall; but ill health compelling him to retire, the Rev. T. Clowes, from Bristol, is now classical tutor.

The excellent Dr. Steadman was succeeded by the Rev. James Acworth, the present theological tutor and president. The average number of students is about eighteen, who pursue the usual routine of the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages, mathematics, divinity and ecclesiastical history. Towards the latter part of Dr. Steadman's life, some very noble instances of liberality to the academy cheered his heart. Thomas Key, Esq., of Water Fulford, near York, gave nearly thirteen hundred pounds towards the purchase and improvement of the buildings. Samuel Hope, Esq., of Liverpool, subscribed fifty pounds a year, towards the current expenses, in which he was followed by Broadley Wilson, Esq., of Clapham, near London.

The General Baptist Midland Seminary, Loughborough.

The General Baptist Education Society placed, in 1825, a small number of young men under the Rev. Thomas Stevenson, pastor at Loughborough, to be educated for the ministry. The Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages, mental and moral philosophy, evidences of natural and revealed religion, theology, and Jewish antiquities, are taught. The number of students varies from four to eight, and five are now under tuition. The income of the institution is derived solely from voluntary subscriptions, and is not more than two or three hundred pounds per annum.

Caermarthen Academy.

This seminary, which derives its present name from its locality, is supported by what is called the Presbyterian Fund Board. The Rev. David Peter was the tutor, from the year 1795, until he was removed by death. He was also pastor of the Congregational church in Lammas Street, Caermarthen, which was, at the commencement of his ministry there, small, having not more than fifty members; but his labours were successful; for his preaching was sound, judicious, practical, and affectionate, and his conduct exemplary. His congregation built a new and larger place of worship, and afterwards rebuilt it on a still larger and handsomer scale, so that it is now one of the best in the principality; and he was accustomed to administer the Lord's supper to about six hundred communicants. But he was at length visited with paralysis, which produced great mental depression, and seriously interrupted his labours. The Rev. John Breese, of Liverpool, was, therefore, invited to be his colleague, and finally succeeded him, in the pastoral charge. Mr. Peter was removed from his labours and sufferings, May 4, 1837, in the seventy-second year of his age. He was distinguished by prudence, firmness, and decision of character, both as a pastor and as a tutor, by which he was enabled to fill a post of considerable difficulty. He published, in the Welch language, the History of Religion in Wales; and, at his death, the high estimation in which he stood was displayed.

During the early part of Mr. Peter's tutorship, Mr. Davies, minister of Lanybre, was classical tutor.

Though there were sometimes Arian or Socinian students in the college, they were few in number; but several of the classical tutors were of those sentiments. The Rev. D. L. Jones held that office, in which he was succeeded by Mr. Palmer. The present classical tutor is Mr. Lloyd, a Unitarian minister, who preaches to a small congregation in the country. It is said that little injury has been done to the students of evangelical sentiments, by their connexion with persons of another faith; for, while they learn the state of the controversy with the Socinians, their creed has not appeared worthy of adoption.

Mr. Peter's successor as theological tutor, is the Rev. David Davies, from Panteg.

The institution, deriving its support from the Presbyterian Fund Board, is visited once in three years by a deputation from this body. Drs. Rees and Lindsay, and other persons of note in that connexion, have been among the visitors, who, on those occasions, have preached in the Independent chapel, but have not introduced their peculiar sentiments, conducting themselves with kindness, candour, and forbearance.

The number of students is about twelve, and the course of study includes four years. Though the Presbyterian funds support the institution, it has been of great use to the Independent churches in Wales, supplying them with valuable orthodox ministers.

The Independent Academy, Newtown, Wales.

The Independents and Presbyterians had joined to support the academy at Caermarthen, till Mr. Thomas, the theological tutor, departed from the ancient faith,

and then the Independents withdrew, and formed a new institution at Abergavenny, under the care of Mr. David Jardine. Dr. Davies was afterwards the theological tutor, and when he took the charge of the Old College at Homerton, the Welch seminary was removed to Oswestry, where Dr. Williams was its theological tutor. When he resigned the chair, the institution was removed to Wrexham, and placed under the care of the Rev. Jenkin Lewis. It was afterwards removed with Dr. George Lewis to Llanfyllin, in Montgomeryshire; and with him went to Newtown, in Montgomeryshire. He was called away by death in 1822, leaving behind him a high reputation for talents, learning, and worth. He wrote, in Welch, a body of divinity, and a commentary on the New Testament. The Rev. Edward Davies succeeded to the theological chair. Mr. Bowen was the classical tutor, but he afterwards removed to Macclesfield.

The course of study at Newtown has included Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Chaldee, and Syriac, theology, logic, mathematics, and ecclesiastical history. The Welch language is cultivated critically, as many of the students ultimately exercise their ministry in that tongue. The report of the examination, in May, 1823, was highly creditable to the institution, which had recently been deprived of its excellent tutor, Dr. George Lewis.

The Congregational Fund Board, having for many years supported this theological seminary, for the education of pastors for the Congregational churches in Wales, at length concluded "that the improved circumstances of these churches required that they should participate alike in the support and the management

of the academy." The board, therefore, passed a resolution, in March, 1836, that Newtown was no longer eligible for the academy, and that all further grants should, after the following Christmas, be withheld, unless it should be placed under the effective and direct management of the Welch churches, in co-operation with the board. But, as little hope was entertained of the efforts of the churches being duly called forth, while the board continued its support, it was resolved, in October, 1836, that the board should no further interfere in the formation, or support, of such an institution. At the same time intimation was given, that if an academy were formed of which the board could approve, it would afford its aid.

In consequence of this resolution, delegates from various Welch counties met in Brecon, and appointed a committee to establish a new academy in that town. The committee purchased a house for £1150, and collections were made for raising that sum, and providing a permanent income for the support of an academy. The happy consummation of this affair is much to be desired, as Wales needs all the advantages which such an institution would afford.

Seminary at Neuaddlwyd, Cardiganshire.

This was not originally intended to be a collegiate institution, but a congregational school. It has been a preparatory seminary for the Presbyterian College, at Caermarthen, and the Congregational, at Newtown. It was established in 1810, and has been ever since under the care of Dr. Thomas Philips. But the seminary at Neuaddlwyd is introduced here because

some finish their studies under Dr. Philips, and go at once into the ministry.

From the character of the seminary, it may be seen that the course of instruction is varied. Those who are intended for the ministry, pursue the study of the Greek Testament, logic, and ecclesiastical history. Several of the Welch ministers were educated here, and some of them rank among the most estimable and useful. But the voluntary contributions of the Congregational churches for this object have not been kept up, and the students have been left to their own resources, or the aid afforded by the churches from which they came. It is feared, that if Dr. Philips, who is now in ill health, should be removed, the institution, which has been very useful, will not be continued.

Penwayne Auxiliary Institution, near Newport, Monmouthshire.

This seminary, which somewhat resembles the preceding, originated in the difficulty which some young men found in obtaining funds to support themselves for two years at the preparatory school, which was necessary to their admission into the Newtown Academy. The Rev. Daniel Davies, of Penwayne, therefore, benevolently took them under his tuition, and he has at present five, who are preparing for the ministry; the whole number who have gone from under his care is twenty-two. It is to be regretted that he is not encouraged by the contributions of the churches, and especially of the rich. As the young men, on their entrance, are such as need even a preparatory edu-

cation, to fit them for entering a college, Mr. Davies imparts the most elementary instruction, but advances to Latin and Greek, none of them having yet been able to enter on the study of Hebrew.

The Bala School, for the Welch Calvinistic Ministers.

Though we have given the name of a school to this institution, and placed it after the preparatory seminaries, it is intended to occupy a higher rank than the reader might thus be led to imagine. It is, in fact, a new college for the Calvinistic Methodists of Wales. That body, like the Wesleyans, after opposing, have felt the necessity of adopting, a system of education for their ministers. The Rev. Mr. Charles, the grandson of the celebrated leader of the Welch Calvinistic Methodists, after studying at Oxford, with a view to the established ministry, and gaining university honours, has determined to follow his father's steps, and has become tutor of a new institution, in which he has, for his colleague, a pupil of Dr. Chalmers. But the seminary has so recently been formed, that we can only express our hope that it will greatly improve a communion which has been an eminent blessing to Wales.

The Baptist Academy at Pont y pool (late Abergavenny.)

This seminary, which has existed thirty years, is under the presidency of the Rev. Micah Thomas, who teaches theology and the learned languages.

The institution was removed, in 1836, from Abergavenny to Pont y pool, in Monmouthshire. Suitable

buildings have been erected, and to the contributions in Wales have been added those of London, to meet the expense. The institution is in an improving state, and gives an education of four years to about ten students; having sent out, since its commencement, nearly a hundred ministers.

The Theological Academy, Glasgow.

This is the only collegiate institution for the Congregational churches in Scotland. Its name expresses correctly its design, which is exclusively theological. Availing itself of the advantages of its locality, it aids the young in pursuing their studies under the professors of languages and philosophy in the University of Glasgow, but provides a divinity hall, where theology is taught gratuitously by the Rev. Greville Ewing, A.M., and Ralph Wardlaw, D.D., who are pastors of Congregational churches in the city.

This seminary, which rose into distinct existence about the year 1814, may be considered as a revival, or continuation, of one which Mr. Robert Haldane had created in Edinburgh. On the change which took place in his views, it became necessary to provide the present institution for the Congregational churches of North Britain, and they happily engaged the services of the present able tutors.

The institution has no buildings, but provides board and lodgings for some of the students, though many of them support themselves. As they differ much in their previous acquirements, some having nearly finished their university course, before they enter upon that of theology, while others pursue the two courses

simultaneously; the time for continuing in the theological academy, which is four years, is not very rigidly observed The number of students varies also; but, from small beginnings, it has steadily increased. In 1837, it was reported that there were upwards of twenty in the institution; seven missionary students were added to that number, some of them supported by the London Missionary Society; and often young men from England and other countries, who are studying at the university, avail themselves of the opportunity of receiving lectures on theology at the Congregational Divinity Hall.

Exegetical and systematical theology being the objects of attention, lectures are delivered four times a week, and homilitical and expository exercises are required from the students, who deliver also, once a year, essays before the constituents. This course is pursued from the beginning of November till May, while the session of the university lasts.

During the summer, the students are extensively engaged as home missionaries, especially in the north and west, under the patronage of the Congregational Union for Scotland. In July, 1837, about eighteen went out on this service, some of them to preach to the Highlanders in their native tongue.

The expenditure of this institution, scarcely amounting to five hundred pounds annually, is provided for by the voluntary contributions of the Congregational churches, which have received great benefits from a seminary so wisely and vigorously conducted.

Dublin Theological Institution.

This small, but highly important, seminary, originated, like many kindred institutions, from a benevolent effort to diffuse the light of the gospel in its vicinity. In the month of May, 1814, a meeting was held in London, of friends to religion, of various denominations, who formed the Irish Evangelical Society. It was then resolved, that the resources of the society should be directed, first, to the maintenance of a seminary, in which students shall be prepared to preach the gospel of Christ; and as it appears that persons acquainted with the prejudices, and accustomed to the habits, of the people among whom they labour, will be received with more cordiality, and will conduct their ministry with more facility, than foreigners and strangers; that these students shall be selected principally, if not entirely, from among the pious natives of that country in which the academy is to be established. A thousand pounds were soon subscribed to accomplish the benevolent object, and Thomas Walker, Esq., of London, was appointed treasurer; and the Rev. Mark Wilks, and J. Richardson, Esq., were nominated as secretaries.

The Rev. Thomas Loader, who had been invited from Fordingbridge, in Hampshire, entered on his labours as theological tutor, in the year 1815. Six young men were admitted at the commencement; and several others offered themselves as candidates. This method of evangelising Ireland, called forth many native teachers, who derived essential benefits from the institution, and carried into the dark parts of the

country the light of the gospel. The academy did not, however, long enjoy the advantage of Mr. Loader's pious and benevolent services; for his health being delicate, he resigned his office.

Dr. Cope, who removed from Launceston, in Cornwall, was then invited to Dublin; but the Irish Evangelical Society withdrew its support, and the institution suffered a temporary extinction. It was, however, revived in 1832, under the auspices, and at the expense, of the inhabitants of Ireland. The first report of the resuscitated academy, dated January, 1833, contains the following statement. "Few will deny the propriety of some provision for the education of those young men of piety and talent, natives of Ireland, who may be anxious to go forward to the work of the ministry, and may wish to avail themselves of the requisite preparatory instruction, without leaving their native land."

The Committee have arranged a plan which seems to have obtained very general approbation. They made arrangements with Rev. William Haweis Cooper, as having been, for several years, the resident tutor under the Irish Evangelical Society, "for receiving into his family such young men as their funds might enable them to place under his care, for general and theological instruction, and at the same time for educating gratuitously, any number of *extern* students whom the committee might deem eligible for that purpose. Of three candidates for admission as *intern* students, two have been admitted, and the committee have made arrangements for the instruction of each of their *intern* students in the Irish language."

The committee of the Irish Evangelical Society informed the founders of the new institution, that they concurred in the opinion that a theological academy would be desirable, and though they felt their inability to support such an institution, they would afford such co-operation as their means would allow. This revival of the academy was very happily commended by one who had been educated at Manor-street, and who seems to have thought the institution unfairly depreciated.

"Ireland will, I trust, after all, have cause to bless the day in which the former academy was founded; and, perhaps, if an equal number were taken, just as they stand, out of any denomination of ministers in the British empire, the zeal, piety, disinterestedness, and truly ministerial requisites of those brought up in Manor-street would not suffer loss upon a strict comparison. In the opinion of many, something superhuman was expected from them, and when they were discovered to be but men, it appears they were slighted as if unable to acquit themselves like men. A review of my life in it presents to my memory much that is humiliating, yet over the gloomiest scenes that my recollection can make in vision pass before me, I see the refulgence of a light so pleasing, that I cannot hastily, nor without reluctance, turn my eyes to others, though, apparently, at first view, more cheering prospects. I could, with pleasure, live that period again, and I am sure to more personal advantage. As an impatient recruit prefers the unknown horrors of the field to the drudgeries of barrack-yard discipline, and never fully sees the importance of the minutiæ of drill

until he grapples with his foe, it is to be feared that many (quorum ego) soldiers of an infinitely nobler cause do not sufficiently value and avail themselves of academical pursuits and advantages, until they come to close engagement with the enemies of Messiah's kingdom — then they learn the humiliating lesson of neglected means of improvement — then they must begin to buckle on the armour but loosely thrown over them, until the enemy was presented to their view in an aspect so formidable as they never dreamt of."

The term of study is four years, and the course is Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, the elements of general knowledge, and the various branches of theology. Every resident student will be expected to learn the Irish language, for which a provision is made by the committee; a benefit that will be extended to as many of the non-resident students as think proper to avail themselves of it. Lectures on other subjects will be provided by the committee.

The third report of the revived institution states, that the objects have been happily accomplished, with the general concurrence of the friends of religion in Ireland. Forty preachers have been sent forth from this school of the prophets, since its institution in 1814.

The tutors are, the Rev. William Haweis Cooper, with whom the students reside, and who teaches Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, sacred and profane chronology, and the elements of mental philosophy; the Rev. Dr. Urwick, who gratuitously instructs in theology, biblical criticism, and ecclesiastical history; and Mr. Owen Conellan, of the Royal Irish Academy, who

teaches the Irish language. The students preach the gospel in the neighbourhood, during their term of study. Their labours in the Irish tongue are an important feature in this institution. (*See 4th Report, p.* 4.) Among its benefactors should be mentioned the Hoxton Hibernian Association. If, of seminaries for the dissenting ministry, this should be deemed last in date and least in extent, a discerning eye will see in it the germ of great blessings to a country which can put forth the strongest claims to the liberality and zeal of Christians. Ireland has too long been the opprobrium of England, whose sons should at last aspire to hear it said by the common Lord of all, "It shall come to pass, that as you were a curse, so will I save you, and you shall be a blessing."

In its fifth year, the Dublin Academy contained five students, who are studying the Irish language with diligence and success. Their vacations are employed in preaching the gospel amidst the dark parts of the sister isle, where they have found the native tongue of the Irish of great use, in communicating knowledge and conciliating good will. This institution is the only resource for supplying Ireland with native preachers in the Congregational churches, which are constantly increasing, through the zealous efforts of the Irish Evangelical Society, and Congregational Union. The principal support which the Dublin Academy receives from England, is due to the Hoxton Auxiliary, which voted for this object, last year, nearly one hundred pounds.

The Wesleyan Theological Institution.

This is a new seminary for the ministry, among those who formerly took their travelling preachers from the class called local preachers, without any collegiate preparation. Not that an education for the ministry was so remote from the genius of methodism as some have imagined; for Mr. Wesley had, as early as the year 1744, projected "a Seminary for Labourers." Since the death of their founder, the Wesleyans, at different intervals, had turned their attention to this subject, and in various ways had endeavoured to afford instruction to their young ministers. But, in 1833, the Conference determined to form a theological seminary, and in the following year their plan was matured, including the following branches of learning.

"1. English Grammar, Composition, and Elocution; Geography and History; and elementary instruction in the Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, and Chemistry, and in Logic and the Philosophy of the Mind.

"2. Theology; including the Evidences, Doctrines, Duties, and Institutions of Christianity, and having particular reference to those views of the Christian system, in its application to experimental and practical religion, which are held by our body to be conformable to the Holy Scriptures. This will also include the General Principles of Church Order and Government, connected with a distinct Exposition of our own established Discipline, and of the proper methods of administering it for the purity, edification, and preservation of our societies; and a view of the nature and importance of the Pastoral Office and Care, with special reference to the duties and engagements of a Methodist Preacher.

"3. The Elements of Biblical Criticism; the best methods of critically studying the Scriptures; the Rules and Principles to be

observed in their Interpretation; Hebrew, Greek, and Roman Antiquities; and the Outlines of Ecclesiastical History.

"4. The most useful methods of direct preparation for the pulpit; and general instructions for the composition and acceptable delivery of sermons.

"5. Such instruction in the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages, as may enable the students to read and study the sacred Scriptures in their original tongues, and prepare them for the successful pursuit of farther Classical and Biblical knowledge, when they shall be called into circuits or missions.—This branch of instruction may, however, be wholly omitted, at the discretion of the officers of the institution, if, on examining the student, at his first admission, or subsequently, they shall deem it most expedient to confine his attention to the English and Theological classes.

"6. That the care and assistance of this institution shall be extended also to those candidates for the Christian ministry, who cannot be received into the Institution-House; for which purpose they shall be regarded as non-resident students. The object of this care and assistance shall be to direct them in the prosecution of their literary and theological studies; to aid them in the purchase of suitable books, according to a list to be prepared for that purpose; and to make provision for their regular annual examination by one of the officers of the institution, assisted by such person, or persons, as the Conference may appoint, in reference to the studies which shall have been enjoined. These examinations of non-resident students shall take place, either at the House of the Institution, or elsewhere, as may be most convenient; and an exact and faithful report of them shall be presented every year to the Conference."

The premises formerly occupied by the Hoxton Academy, and subsequently by the Mission College of the London Missionary Society, were taken for the new institution.

The Rev. Jabez Bunting, D.D., was appointed president of the institution; the Rev. Joseph Entwisle, sen., governor of the institution house; the Rev. John

Hannah, sen., theological tutor; and the Rev. Samuel Jones, a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin, classical and mathematical tutor.

Between the conferences of 1836, and 1837, thirty-one students were resident in the institution house. Two of these were recommended by the committee for a third year's appointment, and thirteen, having been (at the conference of 1837,) resident only one year, were therefore reappointed. The remaining sixteen have been taken into the actual work of the ministry; eight having been sent to foreign stations, and eight to circuits at home. The total number of students from the institution, now engaged in home circuits, is twelve, and on foreign stations, eleven; making in all, twenty-three.

Other seminaries there are, in great numbers, among the Dissenters, who have always been friends of education. Not to mention lower schools, there are superior academies, though they bear not the same relation to the dissenting colleges, as Westminster, Eton, and Winchester schools hold to Oxford and Cambridge.

Mill Hill Grammar School, in the parish of Hendon, near London, resembles those proprietary schools which now abound, except that it is a boarding, and not a day school. It was at first aided by voluntary contributions, and annual sermons were preached for it; but it is now supported by the sums paid for education. As Baptists joined with Independents in its formation, the question on Baptism in the Assembly's Catechism was agreed to be omitted. The school is under the management of a committee, and the pupils

are publicly examined annually, by competent scholars. Beside classical and mathematical masters, it has a chaplain, who watches over the religious instruction of the pupils. For the sons of ministers, and youths of extraordinary claims, an education is afforded, either gratuitously, or at a reduced rate.

At New Windsor, near Manchester, a similar school was created, but soon transferred to private hands. Silcoates Grammar School, near Wakefield, Yorkshire, which was formed on the plan of that at Mill Hill, is now devoted to the education of the sons of ministers and missionaries, on reduced terms. The Congregational School, at Lewisham, near London, was the offspring of the benevolent zeal of John Townsend, pastor of the Independent church, Rotherhithe, and father of the Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb, near London. This institution, for which he laboured assiduously, is designed to educate, on easy terms, the sons of ministers with small salaries.

A school near London for the education of the daughters of ministers, and another near Wakefield for the same object, exhibit rather what has been attempted than what has been done.

As we are charged to "commit the things we have heard to faithful men, who shall be *able* to teach others;" so our Lord is said to have "given some pastors and teachers, to perfect holy men for the work of the ministry." But the *mode* is left to our prudence; and till we can devise some better plan, that which is now in operation claims our support; for "knowledge is better than ignorance, as light is preferable to darkness." Personal piety, and purity of motive, are

essential in students for the ministry; but to be fitted to explain the Scriptures, we should be able to read them in the original; and the Scriptures themselves suppose various kinds of knowledge in their readers. Dissenters have, from their origin, been so far from undervaluing a well-informed ministry, that our Chapter on Seminaries has, in every period, shown great attention to this object. The study of the Hebrew Scriptures, which is the parent of all biblical science, has, in later times, been chiefly preserved among Nonconformists. It must not, however, be supposed that Dissenters insist on an academical education as, in every case, essential to the pastoral office. To say nothing of the Quakers, whose ministry is little understood beyond their own pale, and who are known to have no colleges, though by no means indifferent to education; the Baptists, notwithstanding all their increased attention to these institutions, have still a considerable proportion of what would be called uneducated ministers; and the Independents occasionally call men from secular employments to the pastoral care. As this is not always to be regretted, those who have been employed in training students for the ministry, sometimes officiate at the ordination of such as have never been at a college; for these may be more suited to the work than some who have been educated for it. The Presbyterians never go beyond their colleges to call ministers to take charge of their congregations. The Wesleyans, who formerly provided no seminaries of instruction for their preachers, we have seen founding one at Hoxton; and the Calvinistic Methodists, who have long had their

college in this country, are now imitated by their brethren in Wales.

With regard to degrees, conferred by a diploma from a chartered college, Dissenters differ in their opinions of the value, or even lawfulness, of such distinctions; but as academic degrees confer no rank, and are not recognised by the churches, the harmless inanity creates no dispute. That no dissenting college has the power to grant degrees has not been generally felt as a grievance; and when foreign universities have conferred this honour on Dissenters, it has usually been in consequence, either of an education beyond the boundaries of our less liberal land, or of a literary reputation, or of the officious application of partial friends. But the London University seems intended to alter the course of affairs; though its charter is of too recent date to afford any practical proof of the extent to which it may improve the literary policy of our country, which has hitherto been behind that of every tolerant state.

CHAPTER IV.

CONTROVERSIES IN WHICH DISSENTERS WERE ENGAGED.

If the title of this chapter should be supposed to give proof that Dissenters have been not unjustly charged with a litigious spirit, it should be remembered that our Redeemer, though the Prince of Peace, said, "Think not that I am come to send peace on the earth: I am come to kindle a fire." Whatever rouses the human mind from the torpor of ignorance and sensuality, to a due regard for truth and sanctity, must place it in hostility to the prejudices, or errors, which can produce no peace but that of the grave. The intellectual character of Greece generated the strifes of philosophers, of which the surrounding barbarians knew nothing; and the still loftier genius of Christianity brought her immediately into perpetual conflict with all the errors and vices of the world.

The first dispute which we have to notice, the controversy on Dr. Williams' system, will be admitted by every intellectual and candid man, to reflect no disgrace on the dissenting body; for it was upon a theme that must always interest those who have sufficient mental power to discern the first of all theological difficulties, and hearts duly alive to that which involves the honour of God, and the accountability of

man. None but theologians by habit and by inclination could have originated and sustained this mental strife. In the earlier period of our history, was recorded the contest that arose on the works of Dr. Daniel Williams, of London, which bore upon the modifications of the Calvinistic system; but here we must penetrate to the very core of this much-agitated question.

Dr. Edward Williams, already known to the reader, as filling the theological chair of Rotherham College, published, in the year 1809, "An Essay on Equity and Sovereignty." The intelligent reader of the work, perceiving that it was no ephemeral production, will not be surprised to learn, that it was the fruit of twenty years of reading and reflection. "The first design of the author was to publish a small essay, containing merely his leading views; but, as he proceeded, the subject seemed to acquire accumulated interest and importance."* Peculiar circumstances rendered the external appearance of the work so uninviting, that nothing but its own intrinsic merits, and the high character of the author, could have attracted to it any considerable share of public attention. Whatever may be the conclusion at which the reader may arrive, no one can be pronounced a master of that which may be called *the* theological difficulty, who has not so read the essay as to feel himself compelled to grapple with its positions. With a style unadorned as Euclid, and abounding with technology, which, however correct, and even necessary, appeared to many new and strange, the essay required to be studied, like Newton's

* Preface to the First Edition of the Essay, p. 14.

Principia. It was, therefore, accused of introducing a new system of divinity; though the well read divine felt that it merely presented, in a new light, the principles which had agitated reflecting minds ever since the entrance of sin and grace into the moral world. The ancient philosophers have said, "If there are gods, whence cometh evil; and if there are none, whence cometh good?" For they concluded that deity was the source of good; and not only thought that evil could not proceed from the same spring, but concluded that a benevolent deity must be able and disposed to prevent its existence.

"To the height of this great argument," Dr. Williams directed his mind, and it would not be easy to find one more equal to the mighty task. For he precisely defined his terms, and kept his definitions continually in view; and, while his own mind was superior to the passions of the polemic, his style was most remote from that fruitful source of confusion, the substitution of figures for arguments. The subjects of discussion in this Essay on Equity and Sovereignty, were, moral government, moral obligation, moral evil, that liberty which is essential to agency, the different kinds of necessity, and especially passive power, which was naturally treated by the sciolist as a strange contradictory phrase. The doctor, reviewing the different dispensations of religion, shows that it always had a universal aspect, accordant with the rectoral design of the moral governor, and that it always laid man under obligation to receive the blessings exhibited. The sovereignty of God, Dr. Williams placed in a light that to most will appear new, and certainly is at once

clear, and amiable, limiting it to the conferring of undeserved favours. He shows, in a very instructive way, the difference between Christ as a mediator, providing salvation for all, and Christ as a surety, securing the salvation of the elect; the former exhibiting the rectoral character of God, and the latter carrying into effect the decrees of sovereign goodness. Reprobation, as vulgarly understood, he proves to be no counterpart, or consequence of election; for the decree to permit, of which divines have spoken, he shows to be a decree to do nothing, and, in fact, no decree at all. The practical working of his system, Dr. Williams unfolds, in copious comments on two of the principal Arminian writers, Whitby, and Fletcher, of Madely. That which has been emphatically called Dr. Williams' system, maintains, that God, being the only self-sufficient, independent agent, is the only one who is pure act, as the schoolmen say, and is alone free from passive power, or tendency to failure, which necessarily belongs to all creatures. If, therefore, they be dealt with in mere equity, having only that which constitutes accountability, they will fall, of which both angels and men have given proof. But God may, from pure sovereign goodness, either preserve, as in the case of the holy angels, or restore, as in the case of elect men. The design of God, in all his moral government, is to exhibit, in every case, either equity, or sovereignty; for to the one or the other, every act must be referred.

The controversy which this treatise elicited, for it will not be just to say provoked, was less calm and devotional than Dr. Williams had a right to expect.

Some affected to treat his essay as an idle speculation, remote from all practical use; but the whole work showed a direct bearing on every great question, in theology and Christian morals. Others attempted to decry it, as a new scheme of metaphysics and divinity; though the author had fortified his system by large quotations from Gale and Baxter, Fenelon and President Edwards; and, in his notes, from Wolf, and Stapfer, and Turretine, to whom it is surprising that he did not add Leibnitz, whose Theodicé contains the germ, or rather an exposé, of the same system. The first of the above mentioned writers says, "Dependence on God for being, is essential to every creature; and it thence necessarily follows, that they depend on him for all. Whatever is dependent is *ens*, or being, by participation, finite, potential, contingent, and defectible. Nothing is pure *act* but the first, most simple, independent being; no *creature* is pure actuality; where there is dependence, there is somewhat of potentiality, or passive power, either physical or metaphysical. The root or origin of all creatural dependence, is the creature's passive power, and God's absolute dominion over it."

Some who had more zeal for the term Calvinism than knowledge of the system, charged Dr. Williams with Arminianism, because he maintained the universal aspect of the death of Christ, in his mediatorial office; but such Arminians as understood their own system, saw clearly that this essay was what would have been called, in other times, "a blow at the root" of Arminianism. It would have been amusing, if it had not been too humbling, to see, in this controversy, pro-

fessed Calvinists defending, as they thought, their own system, upon Arminian principles.

Dr. Williams had, however, his admirers as well as his opponents. In Wales, his native country, his system attracted comparatively more attention than in England; for it is a fact, at once curious, instructive, and gratifying, that many, amidst the extreme poverty, and abundant labours of that simple region, give themselves to the study of all the nicer distinctions of theology, with an ardour and a mental force seldom found in the centre of wealth, and its attendant science. In England, however, there were some who highly appreciated Dr. Williams' theological researches, though others slighted them as a fruitless, and not a few denounced them as an impious, attempt to discover the origin of moral evil. But, as we have seen that he defended himself by an appeal to former divines, of great name, who held the same sentiments, all he could pretend to, was, the just application of the true principles of moral science. He showed that passive power, or metaphysical evil, from which moral evil flows, neither was produced, nor could be prevented, by any decree, though its effects could be prevented, not by mere equity, but by sovereign goodness, or grace. The creature, left to itself, must fall; physically, if not upheld in being, and morally, if its virtue be not sustained. If a moral system were desirable in itself, or to display the glory of the Creator, it was necessary that equity should be maintained towards creatures that were made accountable, and, therefore, that they should be endued with intellect, freedom, and sufficient objective means of virtue; but, if left

thus, the passive power that is essential to a creature, will inevitably lead to defection, or sin. The sovereignty of God, or his right to do whatever is not contrary to his own character, and which is never exercised but for good, may sustain the creature, who would otherwise fall, or may restore him when fallen. The object of redemption was the display of glorious grace, of which election is a grand effect, and reprobation is a mere negation, or has no positive existence.

The term passive power, which the Dr. employed, was assailed on various grounds, though it was at least as old as Aristotle, whose δύναμις παθετικὴ can be rendered in Latin, only by potentia passiva, or, in English, by passive power. To ridicule it as *powerless power*, is not to disprove, that there is a distinction between a power of acting and a power of being acted upon. Dr. Williams was too wise to war for a word. He contended only for that which Augustine, in his work on free will, and on true religion, has maintained, which Leibnitz terms "*essential limitation*," and Stapfer, "the want of ulterior perfection."

Dr. Williams, who had been maturing his system, ever since 1790, employed its principles in "A Sermon on the Influence of Religious Practice upon our Inquiries after Truth;" in answer to a sermon by Mr. Belsham, who had asserted, that indifference to the practice of religion was most likely to lead to a rational creed. The practical use the Dr. here made of his system, proved that it was not liable to the charge of being a mere barren speculation.

From 1802 to 1805 he had, in conjunction with Mr. Parsons, of Leeds, edited Doddridge's Works, to

whose Lectures on Pneumatology, Dr. Williams appended notes on moral science and theology, containing the principles of his essay. But, in 1804, he published a sermon, preached before an association at Sheffield, on "Predestination to Life," of which his biographer says, "there is nothing in so small a compass extant upon the same subject, which equals this production in comprehensiveness, perspicuity, force of argument, practical application, and devotional impression."

To those who know the works of President Edwards, of New England, it will not appear surprising, that Dr. Williams should become their editor, or that he should have added notes developing his own system. In some of these, indeed, it appears to greater advantage than in his own essay, and the whole compass of theological and moral literature contains nothing more beautiful in thought, or language. They who read them will cease to regret that such a man should have spent his time and strength in editing other men's works, instead of instructing the world by his own. The essay itself appeared, at last, in 1809; and was followed by a second edition, which was, perhaps, a more readable book, but is less valued by many, because the principles of the work are less nakedly exposed, and the Review of Whitby and Fletcher, which was omitted, as a mere episode, had contributed powerfully to display the nature and application of the Dr.'s system.

As that part of the essay which showed the origin of moral evil attracted most attention, it was combatted by the Rev. William Bennet, formerly of London, then of Chapel le Frith, Derbyshire, in a pamphlet

entitled "Thoughts on the Primary Condition of Intelligent Creatures." About the same time, Mr. Bennet published also an "Essay on the Gospel Dispensation," which may be considered as intended to form a substitute for Dr. Williams' view of the rectoral design of the gospel. Mr. B. acquired no credit for metaphysical acumen by measuring lances with Dr. Williams, who, having been visited by a dangerous illness, which rendered it unsafe for him to defend himself, was happy enough to enjoy the services of Mr. Gilbert, a student in the college, competent to the task. Mr. Bennet afterwards addressed "Letters to Dr. Williams on the Origin of Moral Evil."

The Rev. William Parry, theological tutor of Wymondley College, attacked Dr. Williams' essay in "Strictures on the Origin of Moral Evil," which were answered by another gentleman who had studied under Dr. Williams, Mr. Hill, then classical tutor at Homerton College. Dr. Williams, whose confidence in his system was unbounded, and whose zeal was far more ardent than his calm manner and feeble elocution would indicate, answered some attacks made on him by the Theological Review, and especially by the Christian Observer. Mr. Bennet published a rejoinder to the strictures on his remarks by the Rev. T. Hill. As it is observable that Dr. Williams was defended by two who had studied under him; it should be noticed also, that another of his pupils, the Rev. William Moorhouse, of West Melton, took the opposite side, in a "Candid Examination of the Essay on Equity and Sovereignty."

This controversy was the most important of all those

in which Dissenters were engaged during the last period of their history, whether we consider the grandeur of the theme, and its bearing on all the vital questions in religion and morals, or the mental force of the combatants; for though Dr. Williams far surpassed in metaphysical and theological acumen, he was attacked, and defended too, by men who were as competent to the task, perhaps, as any which the age could furnish. His system was most severely criticised, but not confuted; and if we are expected to pronounce a verdict, it would be this:—that his opponents erred by contending that he had done nothing, or worse than nothing; and he, by supposing that he had done every thing; while impartial truth would say, that he had done much, and left much yet to be done. It had previously been admitted, that no one could be accounted a well read divine, who was not familiar with the works of President Edwards, especially his Essay on the Freedom of the Will; and it must now be added, that Dr. Williams' Notes, and his Essay, are necessary to be studied, in order to derive the full benefit of the writings of the American divine.

Those who, on studying this controversy, conclude that, upon Dr. Williams' system, existence is not a favour to an accountable creature, will yet acknowledge, that it is difficult, if not impossible, to deny his grand principles; and that we must suppose there are others yet to be discovered, which will clear up the mystery which hangs over the moral government of God. Every one, however, who is equal to the awful theme, must admit, that we are much indebted to the author of the Essay on Equity and Sovereignty. To

Calvinistic preachers it is invaluable, for it will instruct and improve those whom it fails to convince.

The Controversy on Calvinism.

That this contest should have been revived in each successive era, will excite no surprise in the breasts of those who know the history of the human mind. It was as much the knowledge of the philosopher, as the imagination of the poet, that induced Milton to exhibit fallen angels, sitting in high discourse on free will and fixed fate; for sages, as well as divines, have in all ages agitated this theme; and nothing but universal torpor, or an advancement in knowledge scarcely to be expected, will set the question at rest. The war note was sounded, in 1808, by "Hints to the Public and the Legislature, on the Nature and Effects of Evangelical Preaching, by a Barrister." A first, second, and third parts, by the same writer, attacked, indeed, evangelical preaching in general, even as it exists among the Wesleyans, and the Arminian clergy; but the writer confounds the most important distinctions in theology, and charges opposite parties with destroying human accountability, and superseding the use of moral means, by the doctrines of election and sovereign grace, as well as by gratuitous justification, through the merit of Christ alone, without works. Had his ability been equal to his inclination, this Barrister's Hints would have been the tocsin of persecution; but, happily for him, as well as for his antagonists, the barrister was born after the world had learned the folly, if not the iniquity, of substituting flames for syllogisms.

He was answered by Dr. Hawker, rector of Charles, Plymouth, in a first and second Letter to a Barrister. There followed "A Letter to a Barrister, by a Layman;" "An Appeal to the Legislature and the Public, in Answer to the Hints of a Barrister, by an Evangelical Preacher;" a "Vindication of the Nature and Effects of Evangelical Preaching, by John Styles;" and "The Legislature Alarmed, the Barrister Unmasked, in Two Letters to a Barrister, by a Looker-on." The Edinburgh Review, having followed in the wake of the barrister, in two articles on Methodism and Missions, was answered in "Three Letters to a Friend, by John Styles." Here may be introduced, "Zeal without Innovation," the production of a clergyman; who, without the indiscriminate hatred to revealed truth, which animated the other opponents of Calvinism, suffered himself to become their coadjutor.

The next attack on Calvinism, was a sermon preached at Scarborough, at the primary visitation of the Archbishop of York, by the Rev. Francis Wrangham. The author, who had excited better expectations, indulged in the vulgar misrepresentations of Calvinism, which he seems to have mistaken for a faithful description of that system. In some apologetic notes, the preacher disclaims the intention of espousing the common charges on modern preachers of Calvinism, but insists that they are applicable to the works of the great reformer himself. From some sensible, candid statements on this subject, published by Dr. Vernon, Archbishop of York, at a subsequent period, it may be supposed, that Mr. Wrangham added the notes, on finding that his sweeping censures were

not so acceptable to his diocesan as the preacher expected. Mr. Wrangham's sermon was reviewed at great length, and with much candour and ability, in the Evangelical Magazine for 1809. Mr. William Bennet's Essay on the Gospel Dispensation, which appeared about the same time, may also be considered as a refutation of the misrepresentations of Calvinism, which were so common at this period.

Mr. Smyth, a clergyman of Manchester, published a work entitled, "St. Paul against Calvin;" and was answered by the Rev. William Roby, in "A Defence of Calvinism," which was distinguished by the wisdom and benevolence of that minister of Christ. The Bishop of London, in his primary visitation in 1810, joined the cry against those who go into "the mysteries and depths of Calvinism," and the notions of sudden conversion, absolute election, and the utter insufficiency of our own righteousness.

But the rank and reputation of the writer, if not the ability of the performance, may give the title of the grand attack to "A Refutation of Calvinism, in which the doctrines of Original Sin, Grace, Regeneration, Justification, and Universal Redemption, are explained, and the peculiar tenets maintained by Calvin upon these points, are proved to be contrary to Scripture, and to the writings of the ancient fathers of the Christian Church, and to the public formularies of the Church of England, by George Prettyman Tomlin, D.D., F.R.S., Lord Bishop of Lincoln." This title, as formidable as boasting can make it, excited the more attention, as it came from the tutor of the celebrated premier, William Pitt. It was answered by Mr. Scott,

the venerable commentator, who felt himself attacked as a Calvinistic divine. In two thick octavo volumes, he defended the evangelical clergy from the charges brought against them by their superior. This work, which was heavy, though able, failed to attract the attention it deserved, because it advocated, not truth in the abstract, but truth as maintained by a party. It was remarkable for detecting an error, which may give an idea of the accuracy of episcopal theology. The bishop severely censured an expression in the Homily on Whitsunday, supposing it to be an inference drawn by modern Calvinistic writers.

But our business is with the part which Dissenters took in the controversy which was kindled by the Refutation of Calvinism. Dr. Williams, of Rotherham, published "A Defence of Modern Calvinism, in answer to the Bishop of Lincoln's Refutation." This work has two advantages over Mr. Scott's; for, instead of confining himself to the defence of a certain class, Dr. Williams pleaded for truth, without respect to party, time, or place; and while Mr. Scott, by following the bishop's vagrant course, became immethodical and wearisome, the Independent divine gathered into regular order the adversary's rambling charges, and formed a well arranged system of important theological disquisitions. It was equally amusing and instructive, to observe how the clergyman and his diocesan differed, as if they belonged to opposing communions; while the episcopalian commentator and the dissenting professor agree, and co-operate, as brethren of the same church. Such is the efficacy of acts of uniformity; and such the import of the word dissent. The two

answers agreed, also, in spirit, and in the truly Christian treatment which they gave to the bishop, who had made a provoking attack. It has been observed, with strict justice, by Dr. Williams' biographer, that, "learned and able as the bishop was, it is obvious, that, in the subject discussed, he was but a novice, though he is treated by his antagonist with all the delicacy and deference due to elevated station. Dr. Williams' manner is like that of the master of a petulant young prince, respectfully correcting his lordly pupil. Dr. Williams' work cannot fail of being regarded as a production of singular excellence in the department to which it belongs, of the highest utility to those who would obtain clear notions on the most difficult parts of theology, and as adapted to fix principles in the mind, by which apparently discordant parts of Scripture are harmonised, and the moral government of God, and the sovereignty of his grace, alike established."* The spirit of the attacks on Calvinism may be seen by the following title. "The Predestinated Thief; or a Dialogue between a Calvinistic Preacher and a Thief condemned to the Gallows, with an application to the recent case of R. Kendall, who was executed at Northampton, August 13th, 1813. Translated from the Latin." The Editor was the Rev. E. Griffin, curate of St. Nicholas, Nottingham.

A contest in a religious periodical, gave rise to several publications on Calvinism. An admirer of Dr. Adam Clark, having sent to the Editor of the Evangelical Magazine, an extract from the Dr.'s Commentary on Acts xv., containing his views of God's

* Gilbert's Memoirs of Dr. Williams, p. 519.

foreknowledge, or rather of his determination not to foreknow the actions of accountable agents, in order to leave them free; the Magazines for June and July, 1818, gave a full reply, defending the foreknowledge of God, as a fact consistent with moral government, and the accountability of man. This drew forth a publication, entitled "A Letter to the Rev. George Burder, in Answer to Observations in the Evangelical Magazine, on Dr. Clark's Remarks on the Foreknowledge of God." The editor having been severely accused of giving a garbled extract from Dr. Clark, defended himself by showing that he inserted every word sent to him, by way of challenge, from Dr. Clark's admirer. Another work appeared on the Arminian side, anonymous, but ascribed to John Wilkes, jun.; and a defence of the Calvinistic view, proving God's foreknowledge from the Prophecies, by Gill Tims. Dr. Clark's views, which are peculiar, are not defended by Watson in his Christian Institutes; and the defence of Calvinism in the Evangelical Magazine, excited considerable attention, as enabling ordinary readers to unravel the entangled web which the Doctor has exhibited in his Commentary. The letter of Verax, which was too abusive to be argumentative, was answered in the first two numbers of the magazine for 1819.

Among the ammunitions of war in this field, must be mentioned, "The Doctrines of General Redemption, as held by the Church of England, and the early Dutch Arminians; also Calvinism and Arminianism compared in their Principles and Tendency, both by J. Nichols." This was followed by "A Translation

from the same author of the Works of James Arminius, D.D. of Leyden, with Brandt's Life of him." On the Arminian side, again, was published, "Considerations on the Subject of Calvinism, by William Bruce, Knight, A.M., Chancellor of Landaff Cathedral;" of which his reviewers said, "he copied from Bishop Tomline the pretended articles of the synod of Dort, which that ignorant and careless prelate had borrowed from Peter Heylin, which are, both in substance and design, a falsification and forgery."

In opposition to a sermon by Dr. Clark, appeared another, entitled "The Eternity of Divine Mercy established, and Unconditional Reprobation Discarded, by William Calton."

"Arminianism and Calvinism compared, by William Moorhouse, of West Melton, Yorkshire," was a review of the whole question, which must convince every candid reader, that Bishop Horsley gave shrewd advice to his clergy, when he said, "understand what Calvinism is, before you attack it." The same sentence will apply to "Lectures on Divine Sovereignty, Election, the Atonement, Justification and Regeneration, by Dr. Payne, of Exeter," the perusal of which would compel any candid and discerning Arminian to own that the writers on his side, were not usually aware of the nature and difficulties of the task they have undertaken.

To enumerate all the minor works which appeared on this controversy, would scarcely be possible; but it is gratifying to observe, that greater ability, and better temper were exhibited at this period, than when Wesley and Whitefield separated on the same question.

Controversy concerning the Female Penitentiary.

A Penitentiary having been instituted in Pentonville, near London, chiefly by Evangelical Dissenters, for the recovery of prostitutes from the paths of vice, William Hale, Esq., issued, in 1809, "An Address to the Public, on the dangerous tendency of the London Female Penitentiary." Had this been the production of one averse, or even indifferent, to benevolent and pious schemes for the good of mankind, it would probably have attracted little notice, and excited no controversy; but the well known piety and zeal of the author, induced the friends of the institution to come forward in its defence, which led to a war of pamphlets. William Blair, Esq., gratuitous surgeon to the institution, was the author of one, entitled, "Prostitutes reclaimed, and Penitents protected, in Answer to some Unreasonable Objections made against the Tendency and Principles of the London Female Penitentiary." On the same side, appeared the following:—"The Remonstrant, being a Letter to Mr. William Hale, in Reply to his Address to the Public, on the Injurious Tendency of the Female Penitentiary;"—"A Letter to William Hale, Esq., upon his Remarks on the Injurious Tendency of the Female Penitentiary, by R. Hawker, D.D.;"—"Cursory Remarks on a Recent Publication, entitled 'An Address to the Public, on the Tendency of the Penitentiary,' by Juvenis;"—"A Defence of the London Female Penitentiary, against the charge of Dangerous Tendency, by William Shrubsole;"—and "The London Female Penitentiary defended, by John Clarke."

Mr. Hale published, "A Reply to the Defenders of the Female Penitentiary." This was followed by "An Appeal to the Public, or a Vindication of the Character of Mr. Hale, by John Thomas," pastor of the Independent Church, Founders' Hall, of which Mr. Hale was a member and a deacon. Mr. Blair replied to both these, in a tract entitled, "The Pastor and Deacon Examined." "A Vindication of the London Female Penitentiary" appeared, with the signature of G. Hodgson. The character of Mr. Hale could not have been assailed, except by those who, not knowing him, concluded, that an attack on what they deemed a good institution, must have been written by a bad man. But some of the wisest and most benevolent of men entertain grave and not unreasonable doubts of the ultimate tendency of many of those schemes of charity, which commend themselves most strongly to the hearts of others It is, however, highly gratifying to record, that this undue excitement and alienation of good men, ended in a friendly conference, in which the parties agreed to lay aside their hostility, and to leave each other to think and act for themselves on the subject of Penitentiaries.

Mr. Hale afterwards published "Considerations on the Causes and Prevalence of Female Prostitution, and on the most Practicable Means of preventing that Crime." This was an offering on the altar of peace, which showed that the author was far from being one of those who raise objections to schemes of charity, to apologize for their own selfishness.

The Penitentiary was, perhaps, benefited rather than injured by this contest; for, becoming more

known, it was better supported; while its distinguishing feature, the watchful superintendence of Christian ladies, has been crowned with tokens of the divine blessing, in the salvation of several unhappy women, who have given proofs of having been plucked as brands from the burning.

The controversy excited by the Penitentiary in Pentonville, was so far from quenching the zeal of Dissenters for this form of charity, that, while the old institution acquired additional strength, a new one was established, under the title of the Maritime Female Refuge. This was placed nearer to the haunts of the sailors, and was accompanied by various efforts for the recovery of the most degraded of our race.

The Socinian Controversy.

The term Unitarian, which is preferred by those who adopt the Racovian creed, is an unjust assumption of exclusive belief in the unity of the Deity; and they who protest against being called Socinians, because they dissent in many points from Socinus, scruple not to call others Calvinists, whom they know to differ from Calvin in several of his tenets. A general coincidence, especially on certain distinguishing doctrines, is all that is intended by these denominations, derived from great names; and it is no disgrace to agree with Socinus, except in those points in which it can be proved that he erred.

The Socinian controversy, then, was revived, or rather carried on, during the last period of the dissenting history, with unabated vigour, at least on one side. The successor of Dr. Priestley, at Hackney, having

removed to a new place of worship, the old one was occupied by Dr. Smith, the theological tutor at Homerton, who preached a course of lectures on idolatry. An anonymous challenge having been sent to him, to vindicate himself from the charge of Christian idolatry, he preached and published, "The Adoration of our Lord Jesus Christ, Vindicated from the Charge of Idolatry." To this may be added, a sermon by Dr. Smith's predecessor, the excellent Dr. Davies, entitled, "The Deity of the Saviour the Riches of Christianity."

But, on the other side, had already appeared, "A Calm Enquiry into the Scripture Doctrine on the Person of Christ, by the Rev. Thomas Belsham." To this, which was considered the most important attack on the divinity of Christ, an answer was soon announced by Dr. Smith, though a considerable time elapsed before it appeared. Meanwhile, Dr. Smith published a discourse on the sacrifice of Christ, with notes and illustrations, which may be considered a part of the Socinian controversy, though not on the person of Christ. On this subject, however, was published, "The Pre-existence and Deity of Messiah, defended on the indubitable evidence of the Prophets and Apostles; in Answer to a Socinian pamphlet on the Unity of God, by W. A. Hails,"—"Scriptural Arguments for the Divinity of Christ, by Joseph Kinghorn, Norwich,"—"Dr. Watts no Socinian, a Refutation of the Testimony of Dr. Lardner, as brought forward in the Rev. T. Belsham's Memoirs of the late Rev. Theophilus Lindsey; in a Series of Letters to the Rev. J. Smith, of Manchester, by

S. Palmer;"—and "A Scriptural Display of the Triune God, and the Early Existence of the Human Soul of Jesus, by John Stevens."

On the opposite side appeared, "A Plea for Unitarian Dissenters, in a Letter of Expostulation to the Rev. R. H. Norris, A.M., on that part of his work against the Hackney Auxiliary Bible Society, which relates to the Unitarians, by R. Aspland."

No work on this subject created more general interest than a volume of "Discourses on the Principal Points of the Socinian Controversy, by Dr. Wardlaw," in 1814. The efforts of Mr. Yates, of Glasgow, induced Dr. Wardlaw to preach these discourses, which rendered a local controversy a public blessing. Mr. Yates and Dr. Wardlaw had too much good sense and good temper to enlist the passions in this war, and therefore the truth or falsehood of their respective opinions engaged the undivided attention of the public.

As a part of this contest, we may introduce "An Essay on the Doctrine of the Trinity, attempting to prove it by Reason and Demonstration, by the Rev. James Kidd, A.M., Professor of Oriental Languages in the University of Aberdeen." The author was not a Dissenter, except as a minister of the Scotch Establishment is so, on this side the Tweed; but the book is of a very singular character, as, indeed, might be expected, in an attempt to prove the Trinity by any other mode than appeals to Scripture. The eccentric author convened, in London, divines of various denominations, to whom he unfolded the principles of his work, previously to its publication. About the same

time, appeared "The Confessions of an Arian Minister, containing a narrative of his conversion, and exhibiting his present views of the principal doctrines of the gospel, by William Gellibrand."

In 1818, came out the work which had been previously announced, "The Scripture Testimony to the Messiah, including a careful examination of the Rev. T. Belsham's Calm Enquiry, by John Pye Smith, D.D." If those who adopt Mr. Belsham's creed make his Calm Enquiry their text-book, the advocates of the opposite system, both among Dissenters, and in the Establishment, appeal to Dr. Smith's "Testimony" as their best defence; for this is a very able and laborious discussion of the doctrine of Christ's divinity. A discussion, it may justly be called, since nothing is taken for granted; but every text is laboriously examined, and none is pressed into the service of the writer, but on sufficient evidence of its inspiration, relevancy, and force.

Though versions of the Scriptures should not partake of a controversial character, we must now mention one, so remarkable for this fault, that it claims a place in this chapter. "The New Testament in an improved Version, on the Basis of Archbishop Newcome's New Translation, with a Corrected Text, and Notes, Critical and Explanatory." This was the work of what is called the Unitarian Society, which employed its funds to give notoriety and currency to a very discreditable specimen of partisanship. The creed of the translators constantly dictates their version, but their chief hope of making proselytes seems to rest on their notes. The work was ably criticised in the Eclectic Review,

and by the Rev. Frederick Nolan, in his Defence of the Greek Vulgate. On the same side was the following work, "The Trinitarian Appeal defended, with a view to expose the Errors of the Unitarian Version, by Samuel Newton, Witham, 1820."

To "Lectures on Modern Socinianism, by Joseph Fox, Bolton," must be added "A Letter from Robert Haldane, Esq., to M. I. I. Chenevière, Pastor and Professor of Divinity at Geneva." For though this concerns the state of controversies in another country, it became part of the conflict carried on in our own. M. Chenevière's "Summary of the Theological Controversies which of late years have agitated the City of Geneva," was published in the Monthly Repository, the organ of Socinianism. Mr. Haldane's letter was designed to unmask the heresy of the Genevese clergy. This branch of the controversy was extended by six letters to the editor of the Monthly Repository, which were, "A Vindication of those citizens of Geneva, and other persons, who have exerted themselves for the revival of Scriptural Religion in that city, in reply to the Representations of M. Chenevière and Robert Bakewell, Esq., by John Pye Smith, D. D."

An "Essay on the Divinity of Christ, by William Jones, of Bolton," which appeared in 1825; and an "Essay on the Divinity of Christ, by John Burnet," in 1835; were among the latest works in this controversy. Dr. Jack, of Manchester, published "A Volume of Discourses, intended as a Refutation of certain Socinian Opinions, in reference to the Doctrine of the Trinity." "The Great Mystery of Godliness, or a Defence of the authorised Reading and Version of the ce-

lebrated Text in Timothy," was a small but elaborate work, by Dr. Henderson, of Highbury College.

The Controversy on Dissent.

Among the attacks made on Dissent, about the year 1814, appeared "The Velvet Cushion," an anonymous religious novel, which was, however, known to be the production of a talented clergyman, not unfavourable to evangelical sentiments, though he deals more gently with Roman Catholics than with Dissenters. This was answered by "The Legend of the Cushion;" and "A New Cover to the Velvet Cushion."

"A Defence of Extemporary Prayer and Calvinistic Preaching, in reply to the Dean of Chester, by George Redford, A.M.," in 1819, observes, that "the Dissenters of the present age have been almost silent on the topics in dispute between them and the Episcopalians; nearly all that has been written by the former has been in reply; whereas, defences of the Liturgy, and impeachments of extemporary prayer, are found in almost every treatise and sermon that Episcopalians publish." In defence of Dissent appeared, in 1817, "Pastoral Letters on Nonconformity, by Dr. Winter;" and Dr. Newman's "Principles of Nonconformity, sanctioned by the New Testament." It will not excite wonder, that Dissenters, who may be deemed Ultra-protestants, should have commented severely on a sermon which Dr. Law, Bishop of Chester, preached on the death of the lamented Princess Charlotte; for it contained the following prayer:—"We commend, too, as far as we may, and as it becometh us, into thy hands, the soul of her who is departed. We pray, we

humbly pray, that she be received into the mansions of the blessed." She had then been dead, nearly three weeks, and this prayer went rather farther than that of Dr. Johnson, of the same church, who, on the anniversary of his wife's death, prayed, "that it may please thee to *have had* mercy on her;" while the homily on prayer, says, "let us not dream either of purgatory, or of prayer for the souls of them that be dead."

Considerable notice was excited by the attack of an evangelical clergyman on the Bible Society, for favouring Dissent. It was in the form of two letters, addressed to a young clergyman, illustrative of his clerical duties in these times of innovation and schism, by Richard Loyd, A.M., Vicar of St. Dunstan's in the West. Of the Auxiliary Bible Associations, he says, "Are not the common people reminded of their numerical strength and ascendancy? Is not their physical force arrayed against the wisdom and authority of church and state? Are they not expressly told, in these days of pressure and sedition, that they can do more than the rich; that their union is strength; that their penny subscriptions would exceed half a million annually? The Dissenters anticipate, with secret satisfaction, a vast accession." To a brother clergyman this vicar wrote, "your bibles are not as good as ours; they smell of schism; they are given in the spirit of schism, and intended to produce that effect."

Of sermons and charges in this strain, the number was so great, that they defy enumeration; but the following work demands notice as a curious specimen

of Sacheverell revived: "Gravamina Ecclesiæ, a statement of the numerous and increasing oppressions of the Church, the substance of a Speech addressed to the Clergy of the Diocese of Exeter; by the Rev. Jonas Dennis, of Exeter College, Oxford, B.C.L., Prebendary of Kerswell, in the Royal Collegiate Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Exeter, 1819." The most remarkable part of the contents of this ultra high church pamphlet is, a declaration that crimes had been committed in Exeter cathedral, which made it necessary to reconsecrate that edifice.

This warfare was carried on, in 1820, by "An Affectionate Address to those Dissenters from the Church of England, who agree with her in the Leading Doctrines of Christianity, by S. Wix." This was followed by "The Dissenter's Apology, containing some Reasons why the Orthodox Dissenters feel obliged, in conscience, not to comply with the Affectionate Address; by S. Newton."

But a more important production was entitled, "On Protestant Conformity, by Josiah Conder;" 2 vols. 8vo., in 1821. The whole question is here discussed, in an elaborate style and candid spirit. The repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts, awakened all who clung to the old system of exclusion; and a specimen of their spirit was given in "Considerations on the Danger of any Legislative Alteration respecting the Corporation and Test Acts, and of any Concession to Dissenters, or Papists, by Stephen Hyde Cassan, A.M." This was an attack on the evangelical clergy, and on Bishop Hoadley, as well as on the Dissenters. The writer says, for himself and his communion, "We

ourselves are a branch of the Church of Rome." In Mr. Irving's letter on the same subject, a kindred spirit breathes, denouncing judgments on the monarch and the nation, if they should repeal the profane and intolerant acts.

Mr. James' "Church Member's Guide," was attacked in a work entitled "The Church of England and Dissent." It was the republication of a critique in the British Review, which turned a confession of evils among Dissenters into a proof of the evil of Dissent. Mr. James defended himself, or rather his Dissent, in a pamphlet entitled "Dissent and the Church of England, 1830."

About the year 1829, the ancient controversy on Dissent took a new turn, and became a dispute on the connexion of the church with the state; so that, from this time, what was called the voluntary principle was the agitated question. This change was not anticipated, as it might have been, by a perspicacious observer of the course of events. For when the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, rendered it no longer necessary to participate in the rites of the Established Church, in order to enjoy the full privileges of a citizen, the attention of Dissenters was turned from the religion of others, to dwell on the injustice done to themselves, in being compelled to support any other than their own worship. If their attempt to obtain relief from this evil may be pronounced a bold step, it was the natural consequence of the success which had crowned a long and arduous struggle against the oppression of the Corporation and Test Acts. The Scotch Dissenters were first in this field, and they

commenced the battle with a boldness and an ardour worthy of the genuine heirs of the men who had vanquished Episcopacy, and obtained a nearer approach to the primitive constitution of the church than their brethren in the south. It was, however, an interesting spectacle to behold those who had formerly maintained the high notions of the old Covenanters, come down to the broad ground of the voluntary principle, and join with the Independents, whom Scotland once abhorred, to secure the triumphs of a common cause. The Presbyterian Dissenters, called Seceders, were, indeed, no mere auxiliaries in this conflict; for they furnished the most skilful leaders, and the most determined troops; though the Scotch Independents, if less numerous, were not less zealous in the war. It is remarkable too, that some of those who, in Scotland, are termed the old lights, the Antiburghers, if not the direct Cameronians, discovered, all at once, that, without changing their principles, they might completely reverse their application. Having contended, that as Christ was king of the church, all earthly sovereigns were mere lieutenants, bound to obey his orders in their rule over the church; they now argued in a different way from the same original position. A very bold and able work was published by one of them, contending that Christ, the Universal King, had deputed to *believers* the rule of the *church*, to which, therefore, kings, as such, had no right, and in which they could only share with others, by becoming real Christians; while the rule over the world, not having been assigned by the Redeemer to one more than another, was left to be shared equally by all citizens

of the state, whose suffrages, expressed or implied, were the fountain of authority. Happily for him who made this new application of the old light, the Stuarts were no longer kings, when he became an author. His work, therefore, was subjected to no severer censure than the pen can inflict.

One of the first and ablest tracts published under this new form of attack on state churches was entitled, "Ecclesiastical Establishments Considered, by Andrew Marshall, minister of the Associate Church at Kirkintilloch." As the substance of it had been delivered at a grand meeting of his own communion, it was considered demi-official, and was, accordingly, severely attacked by the advocates for a state church. A second work on this subject, by the same author, sustained the credit of the former. The Presbyterians were followed by the Independents; and the able pen of Dr. Wardlaw gave to the public a sermon entitled, "Civil Establishments of Christianity, tried by their only Authoritative Test, the Word of God."

The commencement of this controversy in England was marked by a curious circumstance, the republication of Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity, with notes by Benjamin Hanbury, Esq., a well-informed and decided Dissenter. As Hooker has been entitled the "judicious," and his defence of the state church is considered by its friends a *chef d'œuvre*, this republication by a Dissenter was a singular act of defiance. But this was in accordance with the spirit of the times, of which the formation of the Society for the Promotion of Ecclesiastical Knowledge was a proof. Its object was to publish tracts on all the subjects connected with

Dissent, which it treated, not in the ordinary apologetic style, but in the bolder mode of the new tactics. A dominant sect, a state religion, was denounced as an infringement on religious liberty, and the equal rights of all Christians. The tracts of this society were published in the Library of Ecclesiastical Knowledge.

Mr. Matheson, of Durham, may be said to have opened this warfare in England, by a sermon entitled, "Voluntary Churches the true Churches of Christ," which he afterwards defended, in "A Reply to the Remarks of the Rev. P. Pensom, Vicar of St. Oswalds." Mr. Thorne, of Winchester, treated the modern question in the same comprehensive way as he had adopted with regard to Baptism; for he published "The Union of Church and State Antiscriptural and Indefensible;" exhibiting every material argument hitherto advanced for and against political establishments of Christianity.

Another work had appeared at an earlier period, entitled, "An Appeal to Equity, showing the unreasonableness and injustice of obliging Dissenters to contribute towards the support of the Church of England, with some remarks on Tythes; by Phileleutherus." This was an answer to a pamphlet entitled, "National Establishment, National Security, by a Clergyman of Oxford." One of the most remarkable titles that appeared in the progress of this controversy was the following:—"The Church of England identified, on the authority of her own historians chiefly, with the Second Beast as described in the Book of Revelation, xiii. v. 11—18, by R. B. Sanderson, Esq., late Fellow of Oriel College, and formerly Secretary of Presentations to the Lord Chancellor."

As the controversy on Dissent exhibited the grand principles of the sufficiency of the Scriptures, and the right of private judgment, a new mode of answering these was adopted by certain divines at Oxford, in "Tracts for the Present Times," in which Popery was employed to oppose Dissent. This, however, alarmed others in the Establishment, and Dr. Fausset preached, at St. Mary's, Oxford, a sermon which he published under the title of "The Revival of Popery." He showed that, among other papistical principles avowed in the Establishment, the restoration of monks was recommended, in order to oppose Dissent. But the preacher himself defended apostolical succession, and traditions, which became the favourite doctrine, even of many evangelical clergymen. Mr. Powel, a Wesleyan minister, was called forth by the ultra high church claims, to write against apostolical succession; and against a sermon by Dr. Hook, of Leeds, preached before the Queen, on the text, if such a one there is, "Hear the church."

Controversy with Infidels.

The term Deist would have been adopted here, as less offensive, had it been fairly applicable; but, as some of the party hostile to Christianity professed Atheism, it was necessary to employ the generic term, infidel. The press had formerly been almost the only instrument of this warfare; but with the advance of religious liberty the oppugners of divine revelation grew bolder; and lectures were publicly delivered, in London, against the Sacred Scriptures and the being of God. Two persons were devoted to the unhappy task of

teaching the mechanics and poorer tradesmen to abjure all religion. One of them was styled the Rev. Robert Taylor, as he had been episcopally ordained, and had ranked among evangelical clergymen. He commenced his infidel ministrations in a large room in Cateaton-street, under the false colours of "A Christian Evidence Society," professing to court fair discussion on Paley's Evidences of Christianity. But, when the suffrages of the audience were given in favour of Paley's decision, the lecturer threw off his mask, and openly avowed his hostility to Christianity. Mr. Taylor afterwards hired Salters' Hall chapel, which had been given up when Dr. Collyer, of Peckham, ceased to preach an afternoon lecture there; and the painful spectacle was exhibited, of infidelity superseding, for a short time, the gospel of Christ. From this school issued a sort of defiance to Christians, entitled, "The Manifesto of the Christian Evidence Society," to which an answer was published by the Christian Instruction Society. To this succeeded "A Course of Lectures on the Evidences of Christianity, delivered at the Monthly Meetings of the Congregational Board."

The other apostle of error was Richard Carlisle, a bookseller in the Strand, who avowed himself an Atheist. He travelled to make proselytes, by publicly lecturing. At Nottingham, he found that the Rev. Joseph Gilbert, an Independent minister there, was accustomed to open his house for conversation, with a view to the conviction of the infidels, who abounded in that town. Mr. Carlisle was, at his own request, allowed to mingle in these discussions; and, after a

private meeting, he called for a public debate, to which Mr. Gilbert consented. But when the discussion was about to commence in the Town Hall, the magistrates refused to allow Mr. Carlisle to speak, in which they were followed by the county magistrates, when the meeting had adjourned to a place beyond the jurisdiction of the civic authorities. Mr. Gilbert declined to plead where his antagonist was not allowed the liberty of reply; and refused to retire, as was proposed, to the open fields, where the decorum necessary to all useful discussion could not be secured.

Out of this abortive attempt at debate arose some correspondence in the Nottingham journals; and Mr. Carlisle, seizing upon a very temperate sentence in his opponent's letter, prosecuted Mr. Gilbert for a libel. As the infidel pleaded *in formâ pauperis*, and contrived to protract the suit to a great extent, Mr. Gilbert was put to a serious expense; for after a verdict had been given in his favour, a new trial was granted, though the suit was not followed up to a second trial, but was dropped. The design evidently was, to increase the expense of the litigation; and as nothing could be obtained from a man of Mr. Carlisle's desperate circumstances, the friends of Christianity in Nottingham felt themselves bound to take care that Mr. Gilbert's fidelity to truth should not be rewarded by being left to bear the ruinous expense.

Mr. Taylor, also, travelled and lectured in defence of Deism, and obtained the honours of imprisonment. On being liberated, he pursued the same career, and, in a visit to Cambridge, he affixed a challenge, in Latin, to the doors of the colleges; and when no one

appeared in defence of Christianity, he threatened to call upon the legislature to confiscate the property which provides a salary for the public orator, whose office it is to defend the Christian religion.

Having published what he termed a diegesis, or professed demonstration of the falsehood of Christianity, he was answered by Dr. John Pye Smith. The Christian Instruction Society set up lectures in defence of revelation, at an hour when the mechanics, who were the prey of the infidels, could attend; but these meetings were disturbed by the intrusive speeches of Messrs. Taylor and Carlisle.

Mr. Taylor afterwards hired the Rotunda, a large building in Blackfriars Road, and assemblies were attracted to hear his jests, rather than his arguments, against Christ and the Scriptures. As money was demanded for admittance, this was, for some time, a considerable source of profit to the lecturer, and of injury to his hearers. He boasted that he had challenged all the ministers of religion to contest the claims of divine revelation, and that they all refused to take up the glove, conscious that they were deceiving mankind. The author of this volume, deeming it a duty to make such boasting void, gave notice of a course of lectures, at Silver-street chapel, on the Lord's day evening, on the internal evidences of revelation, and on Thursday evening, on the external; after which any one would be at liberty to question the lecturer on the subject of the preceding discourse. Mr. Taylor, perceiving for whom this was intended, gave notice of his intention to accept the challenge. He came; and, after the lecture, a chairman was

appointed, and a debate was held on "The Impossibility of Imposture in the Miracles recorded in Scripture."

The fame of the first contest drew immense crowds to the second, which was on "The Jews as Living Witnesses to the Truth of Revelation." The debate was now more animated and protracted than before; and was chiefly remarkable for an assertion, hazarded by Mr. Taylor, that the Jews never were a nation, and are not even asserted to have been one by the Scriptures, which was met by an appeal to Tacitus, and to a text in the Acts of the Apostles, "After many years I came to bring alms to my nation."

The third evening, the crowd was so overwhelming, and so great was the chagrin of the infidels at the figure which their champion made, that they raised a disorderly clamour, which rendered it necessary to dissolve the assembly, without proceeding to the debate. Against the next evening, provision was made to prevent a repetition of the riot, by putting up bars to keep off the pressure of the crowd, and procuring a strong body of the city police. But Mr. Taylor declined to appear; though one of his adherents made a faint attempt to keep up the debate. The course of lectures was finished and published, with the debates that followed on the delivery of each one, under the title of "An Antidote to Infidelity."

The efforts of the infidel party, soon after, ceased. Mr. Taylor was, indeed, imprisoned at the suit of the Society for the Suppression of Vice, for making a mock exhibition of the Lord's Supper. His antagonist applied to the Secretary of State; and Mr. Taylor

being liberated, soon after quitted this country for the continent. Mr. Carlisle also desisted from his public attacks on the existence of God, and professed to be converted to Christianity.

This, which was the last controversy with infidels, was conducted almost exclusively by Dissenters, though Mr. Taylor's former character, as an episcopal minister, seemed to demand the efforts of the established clergy. Mr. Robert Owen, of Lanark, was an auxiliary to the infidels, under the guise of promulging a new view of society. He had made an abortive attempt to form an infidel community at New Harmony, in the United States of America, and then came to London on the same errand. But Atheism was at the bottom of this quixotic scheme, which has met with the failure it deserves. The community of goods, which was to banish all vice from society, has ended in confusion and strife, and every evil work.

Controversies on the Invasion of Religious Liberty.

In consequence of an attempt to tax Dissenting places of worship, an appeal was made to the public through the medium of the press. A serious investigation of the nature and effects of parochial assessments on places of religious worship, protected by the Act of Toleration, by Rowland Hill, A.M., was published in 1814. The same pen wrote on this subject, in 1816, "Religious Freedom in Danger, or the Toleration Act invaded by Parochial Assessments on Places of Religious Worship."

The refusal of some clergymen to bury Dissenters gave rise to several publications. An appeal made

against this petty persecution was answered by "*Perlege si vis*, a Letter to the Right Rev. Spencer, Lord Bishop of Peterborough, in answer to an Appeal made to the Society for Defending the Civil Rights of Dissenters relative to the important question of Church Burial by the Established Clergy; by J. W. Wickes, A.M., Rector of Wardley." On this subject a case was laid before Sir William Scott, whether a clergyman ought to refuse to bury a child baptised by a Dissenter? Reference was made to the statute 25 George III., for granting a stamp duty on the registry of the burials, births, and baptisms of Protestant Dissenters from the Church of England, which gave a legal sanction to Dissenting baptisms. But when a Dissenter of the name of Bott requested the curate of Belton, in Rutland, to bury his child, he received this answer; "You may lay your child by the rest of your family; but I will not bury him, nor shall any one else; I will bury no Dissenter; I will bury only Roman Catholics and Churchmen."

Sir William Scott, however, answered, "I am of opinion, that if reasonable proof was offered to the clergyman complained of, that the child had been baptised in the manner described in the answer to the question proposed by me, he acted illegally and improperly in refusing to bury it, and he might be prosecuted with effect in the ecclesiastical court. The ground on which I hold the refusal of the curate to be unjustifiable is, that the child was not unbaptised, in the sense and intention of the compilers of our liturgy and rubric. What that sense and intention was, is very much a question of fact and of history.

And I think that that history has been collected by different writers, but particularly by Bishop Fleetwood, with sufficient accuracy to authorise the legal conclusion I draw."

Mr. Wickes, however, showed as little disposition as a Dissenter could feel, to bow to Sir William Scott, and published again, under a Latin title, "*Accipe si vis*, a Letter to the Bishop of Peterborough, in answer to the opinion of Sir William Scott, as to the Legality or Illegality of refusing Church Burial to Dissenters." This puny warfare was obstinately maintained, and Dissenters were informed, that they ought to provide their own burial grounds, but to pay the clergy their fees, as if they had done the work. The next publication on this subject was "The Judgment Delivered, December 11th, 1809, by the Right Honourable Sir John Nichol, Knight, LL.D., Official Principal of the Arches Court of Canterbury, upon the admission of Articles exhibited in a Cause of Office promoted by Kemp against Wickes, Clerk, for refusing to bury an Infant Child of two of his Parishioners, who had been baptised by a Dissenting Minister. Taken in short-hand, by Mr. Gurney." The judge decided, that a person was not allowed to be rebaptised, even though his baptism had been very irregularly performed by a layman, or even by a pagan, and quotes the words of James I., "I utterly dislike all rebaptisation of those whom women or laics have baptised." James had just brought here his own children, born in Scotland, and baptised by Presbyterian ministers. Could he ever intend that all persons but members of the Church of England should be excluded from Christian burial?

The court decided, "That the minister, in refusing to bury this child in the manner pleaded in the articles, has acted illegally. It has no doubt in admitting these articles, and does admit them accordingly."

The British and Foreign Bible Society was frequently attacked by the clergy; and though some Dissenters mingled in the controversy, by defending the society, as the contest was almost exclusively among the members of the Establishment, it is not entitled to any further notice. The attempt made, however, in 1830, by some of the school of Mr. Irving, to establish a test, in order to exclude Socinians, was opposed, not only by Dissenting speakers, but also by their writers, who contributed powerfully to the failure of an effort which would have destroyed the catholic character of that institution. A letter to the Honourable and Reverend Baptist Noel, by Fiat Justitia, contributed to set this question at rest.

The Controversy on Baptism.

The disputes on the subject and mode of Baptism have been so continuous, that they become wearisome to record. Passing by a considerable period, during which the publications on this subject were more rare, or rather, less frequent, we must point to the year 1823, when the following works reanimated the con test. "The first Principles of Christian Baptism, by T. Eisdell," who, though the son of a Baptist minister, defended infant baptism. "A Sermon on Baptism, by J. Bass," claims more notice than ordinary sermons, as the author, an Independent minister, had been many years so much in doubt, that his congregation

was left to obtain the service of other ministers to perform the ordinance. At length, he decided in favour of infant baptism by affusion. Dr. Urwick, then of Sligo, now of Dublin, published, at the same period, on the same side, "A Concise View of the Doctrine of Scripture concerning Baptism." But the most comprehensive and interesting view of the question was given in "An Essay on Baptism, by Greville Ewing, Glasgow." His celebrity as a Greek scholar was transferred to his etymology of the word in dispute. After this, appeared, "On Baptism, in Reply to the Rev. Greville Ewing and Dr. Wardlaw, by Rev. F. A. Cox, A.M. 1824." But the following must be considered, at least, a curious work, "A Father's Reasons for not baptising his Children, by a Lay Member of the Church of England." Another work on the opposite side, "The Family Baptist, by Mr. Newbury, 1830," was of a bold order, and contains what may be called new, even on this worn out controversy. The same writer addressed two letters to the Rev. Dr. Henderson, theological tutor of Highbury College, on the relation of baptism to Christian missions. But the most complete display of the whole subject was given, in "Modern Immersion, not Scripture Baptism, by the Rev. William Thorn, of Winchester."

Controversy on the Terms of Communion.

Allied to the ancient controversy on Baptism, was a more modern inquiry into the terms of communion, which was agitated chiefly among the Baptists. For though Dr. Mason, of New York, led the way, by his "Plea for Catholic Communion in the

Church of God," which was republished in this country, the same liberal views were displayed by the eloquent pen of the celebrated Robert Hall, in a volume "On Terms of Communion, with a Particular View to the Case of Baptists and Pædobaptists." On the other side, appeared a posthumous work of Mr. Fuller, of Kettering, "On the Admission of Unbaptised Persons to the Lord's Supper;" and a "Plea for Primitive Communion;" and "Baptism, a Term of Communion, by Mr. Kinghorn, of Norwich." Mr. Hall met his opponents by "A Treatise on the Difference between Christian Baptism, and the Baptism of John." The effect of this controversy was good, as it brought Baptists and Independents into closer communion.

The contest for the management and appropriation of Lady Hewley's property belongs to the history of religious liberty, as far as it was a question of law; but the controversy to which it gave birth demands a place in this chapter. "The Judgment of the Vice Chancellor," which decreed that the Unitarian trustees should be exchanged for men of orthodox sentiments, formed a leading document, to which a kind of official answer was given in "A Letter to the Vice Chancellor of England, in Reply to his Honour's Remarks relative to the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, delivered December 23rd, 1833, in pronouncing judgment in the case of the Attorney General *versus* Shore and others." This was understood to be the production of Mr. Yates, a minister of the denomination which had obtained possession of the funds bequeathed by Lady Hewley. It was immediately answered in a pamphlet, entitled, "The Improved Version truly designated a Creed; a

Letter to the Rev. James Yates, A.M., secretary of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, by Robert Halley, of Highbury College."

In the same category with the last mentioned contest, may be placed the controversy that arose on the annuity tax, to support the established ministers in Edinburgh; for the legal struggle belongs to our second chapter, but the controversial publications on the subject must be noticed here. Dr. T. Brown preached, and published, with notes and illustrations, "Lectures on the Law of Christ respecting Civil Obedience," to show that it was not a duty to pay this tax for the state religion. In answer to which, Mr. Haldane published, "The Duty of Paying Tribute;" and as the controversy was carried on in the daily papers, "A Scotch Baptist" addressed, in one of them, "Letters to Robert Haldane, Esq., in opposition to his work on the Duty of Paying Tribute." A contemporaneous controversy was maintained in England, upon the question of church rates, which many Dissenters joined the Quakers in refusing to pay. "A Review of the Hull Ecclesiastical Controversy," though originating in a local struggle against church rates, was an index of the spirit which at that time was very widely diffused; for the injustice of taxing all other sects for the support of the one which is adopted by the state, was very clearly but temperately proved.

CHAPTER V.

THE EXTERNAL STATE OF DISSENTERS.

SECT. I.—*Intercourse with Government.*

THE operation of religion in the soul is not more powerfully modified by the condition of the body, than the religious portion of the community is affected by the circumstances of the civil state. The pressure of a protracted and widely wasting war had been severely felt by Dissenters, who occupy precisely that middle station in society, which is most affected by the stagnation of trade, and the increase of taxation; when a jubilee was celebrated, on the fiftieth anniversary of the accession of George III., the Dissenters entered cordially into the project, celebrating divine worship in most of their churches. The aged monarch, who was now almost blind, and at war with a great part of the world, was, immediately after, afflicted with the return of his mental disease, which made it necessary to appoint the Prince of Wales regent. The decisive battle of Waterloo having restored peace to the bleeding nations, the Princess Charlotte, daughter of the Prince Regent, was, in 1816, married to Leopold, Prince of Saxe Cobourg, on which occasion, the ministers of the three denominations of Dissenters in

London, presented to the Regent an address of congratulation, which was favourably received.

The death of George III., on the 29th of January, 1820, in the eighty-second year of his age, after a reign of sixty years, was scarcely felt; for he had been, for nine years, withdrawn from public view. That degree of religious liberty which he had found established, on his accession to the throne, he faithfully maintained. His moral character secured to him considerable popularity, in spite of the pressure created by the expensive and sanguinary wars which occupied the moiety of his unusually long reign. To the influence of the Earl of Bute is ascribed the attachment of George III. to what are called Tory principles, which, though naturally the favourite creed of kings, had been, since the revolution, expelled with the Stuarts, and had vainly attempted to return, towards the end of Queen Anne's reign. But when the exiled dynasty was reduced to the person of Cardinal York, the wholesome fear which had operated on the first Georges, was withdrawn; and when the last of the Stuarts died, the nonjuring tendencies of the Church of England were exchanged for loyalty, which could not but be grateful to the prince, who was willing to forget that it was ardent because it was young. The American war first brought the Dissenters into an antagonist position with the King; for the Puritans and Nonconformists were brothers to the pilgrim fathers of the transatlantic churches; and the arbitrary procedure that roused the Americans to resistance, was but the counterpart of that policy which had driven the Dissenters from the established pale.

The alienation from court policy which the contest with America produced among Dissenters, was considerably aggravated by the war of the French revolution, that appeared to them, a crusade against the liberties of mankind, and a mad attempt to prop up the falling Papacy and its supporters. During this reign, therefore, the Establishment and the Dissenters changed places; for the high church party, which had been a thorn in the sides of the government, ever since the revolution, was now in favour at court; while the Dissenters, who had been regarded with special approbation by the former Georges, were viewed with some suspicion. There were, however, exceptions; for as a low church party had always espoused the cause of the House of Hanover, so there were Dissenters who never took the side of opposition. George III., who was a friend to the education of the poor, and the diffusion of the Scriptures, was never an enemy to the Dissenters, who, in their turn, always gave him his full meed of praise for the morality of his conduct, and his respect for the ordinances of religion. Many Dissenters, indeed, gave the King credit for true piety, though others thought it difficult to reconcile this with his long wars, his frequenting of the theatres, and his disposal of church patronage according to state expediency, to the almost total neglect of evangelical truth. This latter fault, however, has been ascribed to the Queen, to whom the affairs of the church were said to be confided.

The accession of George IV. failed to create the interest which ordinarily accompanies such an event, because he had already, under the title of Prince

Regent, exercised the functions of royalty, though, at first, with some restrictions. The dissenting ministers of London claimed their accustomed privilege of presenting their congratulatory address to the new King on the throne. But as the length of the preceding reign had left few who had witnessed a king's accession, the secretary of state disputed the right, which Dr. Abraham Reece was able to prove, for he had, when a very young minister from the country, mingled with the procession of the London ministers, who were going up to address George III. on the throne. The privilege was conceded, and Dr. Rees delivered to George IV. the following address :—

To the King's Most Excellent Majesty.

"Most Gracious Sovereign,

"We, your Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Protestant Dissenting Ministers of the Three Denominations in and about the cities of London and Westminster, approach your Majesty, with profound respect, to express our sincere condolence on occasion of the breaches made by death in your illustrious House, and more especially on the demise of our late venerable and beloved Sovereign, your Royal Father, as well as our cordial congratulations on your Majesty's accession to the Throne of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

"We partake of the satisfaction which his late Majesty's subjects in general, and his own illustrious Family in particular, must have experienced in the extended duration of his life and reign; and whilst

we lament the personal affliction which, during his latter years, deprived the nation of his public services, we bow with devout resignation to the mysterious will of Almighty God; and we reflect with pleasure on the filial attention manifested by your Majesty and the other branches of his family to his dignity and to his comfort, during his seclusion from the duties and enjoyments of social life.

"We also render to the Supreme Arbiter of the condition of man our unfeigned thanksgivings, that his dissolution succeeded a gentle and gradual decay, without any previous suffering.

"Among numerous other virtues that distinguished his character and reign, his solicitude for the education of the poor, and for the diffusion of those Scriptures which open, both to rich and poor, the best sources of instruction and comfort, will be recorded in future ages to the praise of our much revered sovereign.

"As Protestant Dissenters, we recollect, with peculiar thankfulness, that, conformably to the declaration with which his late Majesty commenced his reign, he not only maintained the Toleration inviolate, but enlarged its protection and benefits.

"We should the more deeply lament the decease of our late sovereign, if we were not warranted to direct our views to your Majesty as his successor, and to assure ourselves, by the experience afforded us during your regency, that you will continue to us the same protection and similar benefits.

"It is, we trust, needless for us to make any public avowal of our attachment to your Majesty's person

and family, and the form of government established in the British realms.

"Whilst we are ambitious of expressing ourselves the invariable friends of civil and religious liberty, we are no less the enemies of every kind and degree of licentiousness, both in principle and practice.

"As none of our number were ever degraded by hostility to the civil government of our country, as it is by law established, we are persuaded that none of us will be found amongst those who profane religion, deride the Holy Scriptures, and diminish the influence of sacred subjects on the minds of the people; but that it will be our uniform solicitude and endeavour to manifest and to inculcate a due regard to religion, to the constitution and laws of our country, and to the honour and tranquillity of your Majesty's life and reign.

"Thus avowing our principles and conduct, we humbly solicit, and feel confident of enjoying your Majesty's protection and favour: prompted, as we are, by inclination as well as duty, it will be always our earnest wish and ardent prayer that your Majesty's reign may be long, peaceful, and prosperous; and that, at a distant period, your Majesty may exchange your present crown, after having exhibited its brightest lustre in the uninterrupted and increasing attachment of a free, grateful, and loyal people, for a crown of celestial glory that fadeth not away."

His Majesty paid a marked attention to the Address, and delivered the following answer with great dignity:—

"I receive with great satisfaction this loyal and dutiful Address.

"The justice which you have rendered to the memory of my beloved father, is highly gratifying to me. You may be fully assured of the continuance of that protection which you experienced during his beneficent reign, and my determination to maintain strictly and inviolably the Toleration now so happily enjoyed."

The ministers then advanced, and had the honour to kiss his Majesty's hand. It had been previously agreed upon by the ministers, that only twelve of their number should advance to the throne for that purpose; which being done, Dr. Rees intimated to the King that, to prevent his fatigue, the rest of the gentlemen would retire; but his Majesty was pleased to express the peculiar satisfaction he felt with the Address, and the manner in which it had been delivered, and desired that all the ministers, if they wished it, might come forward; which of course they gladly did, greatly delighted with this special mark of his Majesty's condescension.

It was observed that, on this occasion, only one of the ministers was present who had joined in the Address to his late Majesty, in 1760, namely, Dr. Rees.

George IV. had scarcely been seated on the throne, when the arrival in this country of his Queen Caroline, from whom he had been long separated, threw the nation into a ferment. Her name having been, by the King's order, excluded from the Liturgy, the worship

of the Establishment was disturbed by the different parties into which its members were divided; and many withdrew for a time from its services, as degraded by connivance at what they deemed an illegal and vindictive mandate. Among Dissenters, prayer for the Queen was offered, or omitted, according to each one's views of duty or expediency. The subsequent trial of the Queen for adultery, was deplored by all friends of morality; but as the bill of Pains and Penalties was sanctioned by majorities so small, that it was ultimately abandoned, the nation would gladly have forgotten the odious affair, had not petitions from the country, and a motion in the Commons, for the restoration of the Queen's name to the Liturgy, kept alive the ferment. The King, however, prevailed, and his consort never was introduced into the liturgical prayers for the royal family.

After a short, but chequered, course of royalty, George IV. died. His reign was as peaceful as the former had been warlike, and he created bishops of such a character as reflected severely on George III., who, during sixty years, had conferred no similar benefit on the national church. The extension of religious liberty, by the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, and by Catholic Emancipation, seems to have been a reluctant concession to the spirit of the times, indicative, if not of more liberality, yet of less obstinacy in the son than the father. For though, as Prince of Wales, George IV. had always espoused the liberal party in the state, it was never difficult to foresee what followed on his coming to the throne, when he made

some feeble efforts to induce a few of his old friends to join the opposite party; and at last acquiesced in administrations wholly composed of those whose Toryism he had formerly condemned. By these, were carried, from motives of expediency, the liberal measures of this reign.

The Duke of Clarence succeeded to the throne by the title of William IV. He had been, during a great part of his life, in the service of the royal navy, and was, for a short time, Lord High Admiral, but had been induced by the Duke of Wellington's administration, which had promoted him, to resign. Having married Adelaide, Princess of Saxe Meiningen, with whom he lived harmoniously, he presented to the nation an agreeable contrast to the domestic life of his predecessor.

The ministers of the three denominations of Dissenters in London, presented to him and his Queen, addresses of congratulation :—

Address of the London Dissenting Ministers of the Three Denominations to the King.

"Most Gracious Sovereign,

"We, your Majesty's loyal and dutiful subjects, the Protestant Dissenting Ministers in and about the cities of London and Westminster, humbly approach your royal presence, to express our sincere condolence on the demise of your royal brother, our late revered sovereign; and to offer our heartfelt congratulations on the accession of your Majesty to the

throne of these realms. We call to mind, with devout thankfulness to the Supreme Ruler of the kingdoms of the earth, that the reign of his late Majesty was distinguished by the unspeakable blessing of peace; we rejoice in the remembrance that under his auspicious sway all the useful arts were encouraged and promoted; science and literature were extended in a degree beyond example in the history of nations; reforms were made in the civil and criminal jurisprudence of the country, by which our legal institutions were brought still nearer to the evangelical standard of justice and mercy; the claims of humanity and Christian benevolence were enforced by the power of this great kingdom, in all the quarters of the globe, and the rights of conscience were invariably respected, and the boundaries of religious liberty greatly enlarged. We are also impelled by gratitude to acknowledge especially, that, under the liberal government of our late beloved sovereign, the Protestant Dissenters of the United Kingdom were relieved from various disqualifying statutes, and were confirmed, by express laws, in their rights and privileges. Your Majesty's faithful subjects, the Protestant Dissenting Ministers, have ever been devoted in their attachment to your Majesty's illustrious house, under whose gracious rule they have enjoyed blessings far beyond the experience of their forefathers; and they entreat you, Sire, to accept their sincere and ardent congratulations on your accession to the throne of your ancestors. The known disposition of your royal mind assures them of your protection and favour; and they pledge themselves, in your august presence, to promote, amongst

the people committed to their charge, loyalty to your Majesty's person, family, and government; obedience to the laws, and all those virtues by which, under the Divine Providence, nations are rendered great and prosperous. Our fervent prayers ascend continually to the King of kings, that it may please him to pour down his merciful blessing upon your Majesty's government, and to make your Majesty's reign long, peaceful, and happy; that he may give to your Majesty to rule in the affections of your subjects throughout the wide extent of your Majesty's dominions, and to receive the satisfaction and delight, dear to the heart of a patriotic prince, of seeing your people united in the bonds of Christian charity, and contentedly and piously thankful in the enjoyment of the bounties of the Supreme Providence, that so your Majesty's happiness may be increased and multiplied in the happiness of your people; that he may grant that your Majesty and your illustrious consort, our most gracious Queen, may enjoy together all earthly felicity; and that he may hear and answer the united supplications of your people; and vouchsafe that, after a reign of virtuous glory, your Majesty may exchange an earthly for a heavenly crown."

The King returned the following answer:—

"This public demonstration of your attachment to my person and government, is entitled to my warmest thanks. The justice which you have rendered to the memory of my lamented brother, and the gratitude which you express for the full measure of relief granted during his reign to the Protestant Dissenters

of the United Kingdom, are highly consolatory and satisfactory to my feelings. I place entire confidence in the fulfilment of your engagements to promote, among those of my people who are committed to your spiritual charge, loyalty to the throne, and obedience to the laws; and I assure you in return, that it will be one of the first objects of my solicitude to maintain inviolate the civil rights and privileges of all my faithful subjects."

To this the King added an impromptu address, which was, perhaps, well-intended, but was certainly ill-advised, and is not worth recording.

To the Queen, also, a separate address was delivered, to which she returned a suitable answer.

The addresses were read by Dr. Thomas Rees, secretary to the general body. For he had previously declared, that the Presbyterians who formerly claimed, on account of their preponderance, certain privileges, had resolved to relinquish them, as no longer suited to their diminished numbers, but had determined now to take the precedence for the last time.

William IV. at first seemed ambitious of restoring to the monarchy that popularity which it had lost under his predecessor; and as the eastern pomp and mysterious seclusion of George IV. had alienated from him the public mind, William showed himself freely, and by the unassuming frankness of a British sailor, gained, as a man, a prepossession which was highly advantageous to him as a king. When the Duke of Wellington, after committing himself by a declaration against parliamentary reform, was compelled to resign

the administration of affairs, the King called to his councils, Earl Grey, who took office on condition of being allowed to make that reform a government question. Its political bearings belong not to this history; but the objection which the Duke of Wellington made to the Reform Bill, as throwing power into the hands of the middle classes, to which the Dissenters belong, shows that they were not uninterested in a measure, to the success of which they powerfully contributed.

But as the reform of parliament was considered, by all perspicacious observers of public affairs, a means to a further end, the reform of the municipal corporations was a natural consequence. It had formerly been projected by Mr. Fox, but was carried by the administration of Lord Melbourne, who succeeded Earl Grey. The high church party had, in their eagerness to create difficulties, objected to Dissenters as unfit to exercise the patronage of those church livings that were in the gift of corporations; but the liberal ministry cut the knot, by introducing a provision for the sale of these advowsons.

While the two parties in the state were struggling against each other, William IV. died, June 20, 1837, and was succeeded by his niece, the daughter of the deceased Duke of Kent. As the late King's early character and history had inspired no favourable prepossessions, the popularity which he at first gained, was to the nation an agreeable surprise. To his Queen he owed much; for she placed him in advantageous contrast with his predecessor, and once more the female part of the nation could appear at court.

His patronage of reform bore every mark of sincerity; and his subsequent abandonment of that cause was, perhaps unjustly, charged upon the Queen. The manner in which he volunteered his declarations of attachment to the Church of England, conferred no dignity either upon Church or King; and the equivocal position in which he at last stood towards his ministers and the nation, caused his removal to be felt as a release from public embarrassment.

The accession of his successor, who was proclaimed Queen Victoria, was an event deeply interesting to the nation. Having been declared, by act of parliament, capable of succeeding to the crown at eighteen, she had but just attained that age, when her uncle died. Her mother, the Duchess of Kent, pronounced by one of the British senators, the wisest of her sex, had certainly earned that proud title by the manner in which she had conducted the education of the Princess. Kept aloof from political parties, as well as from the usual dissipation of a court, the heir to the throne was distinguished by elegant simplicity of manners, a dignified superiority to the frivolities of the great, and a reverence for religion rather than a bigoted fondness for a party. The fortitude and wisdom which she displayed, on her accession, extorted universal admiration; and it was only by the enthusiastic applauses with which the people welcomed her, on the day she was proclaimed, that she was melted into tears, which, with one of her sex and her youth, at such a moment, served only to give additional value to her uniform dignity and self-possession.

When the ministers of the three denominations

of Dissenters in London were about to meet, in order to prepare their address of congratulation to the Queen, on her accession to the throne, they were informed by the trustees, that they could not be allowed to assemble at Dr. Williams' Library, in Red Cross-street, as there was no longer any such body as that which was composed of the three denominations, Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists. The trustees, by this step, opposed the intention of Dr. Williams, which was, that the Library should afford exactly that accommodation to the Dissenting ministers of London, which was now refused. The secession of a party that was never included in Dr. Williams' idea of Presbyterians, was made a reason for excluding all others. To leave aliens in sole possession, the heirs were cast out. After holding preparatory meetings at the King's Head in the Poultry, the ministers of the three denominations assembled at the Congregational Library, and proceeded to St. James's palace, where the Rev. John Clayton, who had witnessed the accession of her grandfather, delivered the following address :—

To the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty.

"Most Gracious Sovereign,

"We, your Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Protestant Dissenting Ministers in and about the cities of London and Westminster, humbly approach your royal presence, to assure your Majesty that we, in common with all our fellow subjects, largely share in those emotions of sorrow which have filled the heart of your Majesty on the death of your illustrious relative, our late gracious and patriotic King.

"The numerous blessings which the adorable Author of all good has deigned to bestow upon this nation, during the beneficent reign of our departed Monarch, excite in our minds the deepest sentiments of gratitude and joy.

"We highly appreciate that great improvement in the representation of the people, which his late Majesty so decidedly encouraged, and which is so admirably adapted to promote the welfare of the united kingdom.

"With lively satisfaction we record the just and liberal enactments of the Imperial Parliament, since the date of that great constitutional measure—enactments that have diminished the number of legal oaths, abated the severity of the criminal code, opened the seats of municipal authority to all, encouraged the diffusion of education, of science, and the useful arts, unlocked the ports of the world to the commerce of our country, and which, we trust, will remove the enormous evil of slavery from the British colonies.

"Nor can we fail gratefully to acknowledge the pacific temper of our lamented sovereign, who, though trained to the art of war, valued and preserved the blessings of peace, and sought, by a righteous policy, to secure the tranquillity and friendship of every nation.

"While, as British Christians, we celebrate these attributes of the late happy reign, it becomes us, as Protestant Dissenters, gratefully to acknowledge that our venerated King respected the rights of conscience, and desired the amendment of those laws which we deeply feel as unequal and oppressive.

"In ordinary circumstances, the loss of such a monarch might have been thought irreparable, but your happy accession, most gracious Sovereign, to the throne of your forefathers, supplies that loss; for you venerate his illustrious example, and wish to perpetuate and extend the blessings which our country enjoyed under his paternal sway.

"We entreat, then, your Majesty to accept our heartfelt congratulations on this most auspicious event, and the assurance of our entire allegiance to your royal person and government.

"As the Protestant Dissenting Ministers of this metropolis, the successors of those godly and patriotic men who assisted to establish your Majesty's family on the British throne, permit us, most gracious Sovereign, to declare that we inherit their firm attachment to the Protestant faith, and their loyal devotedness to the House of Brunswick.

"With the most illustrious of the princes of that house, the name of your Majesty's royal father must ever be associated. We remember his powerful advocacy of the unrestricted circulation of the Bible, and of the universal education of the people in its holy truths; and feel grateful to Almighty God for the salutary influence of those exertions on the welfare of the present generation.

"As your Majesty was deprived of his instructions when unconscious of your loss, we rejoice that one who sympathized with his noble sentiments, was spared to watch over your Majesty's earliest years. Nor can we fail to acknowledge and adore that gracious Providence which has crowned the exertions of your

illustrious parents, by seating your Majesty upon the throne of this great empire, amidst the acclamations of an intelligent and loyal people. Our prayers, most gracious Sovereign, shall continually ascend to "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords," entreating him to be your helper in all the arduous duties of the state; long, very long, to preserve your Majesty's invaluable life, and so to guide and strengthen you by his Holy Spirit, that your Majesty may continue to sway the sceptre of these realms over a free and loyal people, until you shall, through the infinite merits of our Divine Redeemer, exchange these earthly dominions for that kingdom which cannot pass away."

Her Majesty then read, in a firm and clear tone, the following gracious answer:—

"I receive, with satisfaction, this loyal address. I thank you for the justice which you render to the character of his late Majesty, and to the measures of his reign. I am sensibly touched by your allusion to the memory of my father. I shall always respect the rights of conscience, and, to the utmost of my power, extend to all equal and impartial justice."

Each member of the body present was then introduced by name to her Majesty, and had the honour of kissing her Majesty's hand. One hundred and two ministers were thus presented.

As the heterodox Presbyterians, who had, in March, 1836, seceded from the general body, formed themselves into a new association, they applied, and were

permitted to present an address, which followed that of the three denominations.

The Rev. Robert Aspland read their address as follows, and Dr. Thomas Rees officiated as Secretary :—

To the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty.

"Most Gracious Sovereign,

"We, your Majesty's loyal and dutiful subjects, the Protestant Dissenting Ministers of the Presbyterian Denomination, in and about the cities of London and Westminster, humbly approach your royal presence, to express our sincere condolence with your Majesty upon the demise of your royal uncle, our late revered and beloved sovereign, together with our heartfelt congratulations upon the happy accession of your Majesty to the throne of these realms.

"We have ever felt devoutly thankful to the Divine Providence that, during several successive generations, these kingdoms have been placed by the Omnipotent Ruler, under the mild and beneficent sway of princes of your Majesty's august family, by whom the liberties of the people have been enlarged and confirmed, the moral character of the nation has been exalted; and the power and prosperity, the wealth and happiness, of the kingdom have been promoted beyond all example. And we are impelled by gratitude to acknowledge, in particular, the blessings enjoyed by the country during the reign of his late lamented Majesty, in the preservation of peace, the wise and timely reform of some of our national institutions, and the extension of religious liberty, by which the condition of your

Majesty's Protestant Dissenting subjects especially has been greatly improved.

"When we call to remembrance your Majesty's royal descent; when we reflect upon the character of the prince, your Majesty's ever-to-be-lamented father, whose virtues, public and private, endeared him to the British people, and to no portion of them more than the Protestant Dissenters; when we consider that your Majesty's early years were nurtured by the enlightened and patriotic counsels, and the moral and religious instructions of your illustrious mother, whom we have been accustomed to regard as a pattern of conjugal and maternal excellence; and when we bear in mind your Majesty's gracious language in your first speech before your Privy Council, which has diffused general satisfaction and joy amongst your subjects, we entertain the firm and cheering persuasion, that your Majesty's reign will be just and beneficent, honourable to your Majesty, and glorious to your people.

"We have seen, with deep affection and lively sympathy, your Majesty's pious declaration of reliance upon the Divine Providence for support and guidance, and we humbly join our supplications with those of your Majesty and of the whole kingdom, on your Majesty's behalf. May the Supreme Benefactor, the Father of Mercies, grant that on your head the crown may flourish; and that during your auspicious reign, peace may be preserved with all nations, tranquillity may be enjoyed at home, and equal rights and liberties may knit the hearts of all your Majesty's subjects, in love to your Majesty, and to one another. May the King of kings take your Majesty under his Almighty

protection, shield you from dangers, replenish you with all heavenly gifts and graces, and prolong your life and reign to a far distant period, and cause your happiness as a queen to be constantly growing, in the spontaneous loyalty, the cordial affection, and the generous confidence of all classes and denominations of your Majesty's subjects, until, in the course of the Divine Providence, and in fulfilment of the Divine Grace, your Majesty shall be translated from earthly to heavenly felicity and glory."

To which address her Majesty was pleased to return the following most gracious answer:—

"I thank you for your condolence upon the death of the late King, and for your congratulations upon my accession.

"I am much gratified by the feelings which you express towards former sovereigns of my family, and more particularly towards his late Majesty.

"I am actuated by the same principles, and you may always rely upon receiving, at my hands, that protection which is so justly due to you."

Sect. II.—*Numbers and Rank of Dissenters.*

If by numbering the people David sinned, and brought on them judgments which tremendously thinned their ranks, the fault lay rather in the motive and circumstances, than in the act itself, which God had formerly commanded Moses to perform. But there is great danger of counting over numbers, as the miser his gold, to feed our vanity and confidence in our own strength. If some communions publish

an annual statement of their numbers, this has been so far from a general practice among Dissenters, that nothing has been more difficult than to obtain an accurate estimate of their churches, and members, and congregations, and ministers. The statistical view which our earliest historian, Neal, gave of them, in the first period of our history, has been recorded.* In the second period, they were found to be increased. Still more so in the third.

In the early part of the fourth period, now before us, we have the benefit of a return made to the House of Lords, of the places of worship in towns containing a thousand inhabitants, and upwards. It was furnished by the prelates, and ordered to be printed, April 5, 1811.

	Diocese.	Churches, &c.	Chapels not of the Estabt.
1	Bath and Wells	78	103
2	Bangor	52	99
3	Bristol	59	71
4	Canterbury	84	113
5	Carlisle	49	39
6	Chester	352	439
7	Chichester	47	58
8	Durham	116	175
9	Ely	22	32
10	Exeter	188	245
11	Gloucester	46	76
12	Hereford	51	42
13	Landaff	21	45
14	Lincoln	165	269
	Carried forward	1330	1806

* Second Edition, vol. i. p. 358.

Diocese.	Churches, &c.	Chapels not of the Estabt.
Brought forward . . .	1330	1806
15 Litchfield & Coventry	190	288
16 London . . .	187	265
17 Norwich . . .	78	114
18 Oxford . . .	50	39
19 Peterborough .	20	36
20 Rochester . .	36	44
21 Salisbury . . .	135	142
22 St. Asaph . .	149	95
23 Winchester . .	193	164
24 Worcester . .	66	60
25 York	221	404
	2655	3457

These returns increased the alarms of the clergy, who discovered, what they had not anticipated, that the dissenting places were more numerous, by one-third, than those of the Establishment, after all that had been done to crush Dissent. In some parts of the country, there were two dissenting chapels to one parochial edifice. As the above list did not include the smaller towns and rural districts, it should be observed, that village preaching, among the Independents, Baptists, and Methodists, had raised congregations in many hamlets where there were *no* parish churches. In the diocese of York, the Establishment presents, in the larger towns, little more than half the number of the dissenting places; and the village congregations of the Dissenters, especially of the Methodists, were very numerous.

In the diocese of Chester, which had always presented extraordinary obstacles to the Reformation,

many of the dissenting places were Catholic chapels; and smaller deductions must be made from the numbers of Protestant Dissenters in other parts. A slight allowance is also required for Jews' synagogues. But, on the other hand, it should be observed, that the return of the parochial places was sure to be complete, while that of the dissenting chapels was almost as sure to be defective. For the officers who made the returns were frequently ignorant of the existence of congregations which met in obscure places, and which were sometimes willingly overlooked. The Registration, under the Toleration Act, was an uncertain guide, because the places were not always registered as soon as built, while some were entered in the bishop's court, and some at the quarter sessions.

The cathedrals, and larger parish churches, were, indeed, far more capacious than the dissenting chapels; but the congregations in cathedrals are proverbially small, and the whole of a dissenting place is devoted to the worshippers, while large vacant places are found in an episcopal building. The routine of the Establishment goes on when the congregation is reduced to such a state that, among Dissenters, the place would be shut up. By the greater frequency of the dissenting services, a larger number of persons make their religious home at a chapel than the attendance at any one time would indicate.

Having presented to the reader a comparative view of the established and dissenting places of worship, made, by authority, in the early part of the period of which we write; we shall now avail ourselves of dissenting statistics, collected towards the close of the

same era. The editor of the Congregational Magazine, the organ of the Independents, having taken great pains to make complete lists, published them as a Supplement to the year 1827; so that it is eleven years short of the period to which this volume brings down the dissenting history. But all who have made any attempts in this line will justify us for at least recording a summary so laborious and so recent. It contains some details which belong not strictly to dissenting affairs, but might have assisted the reader in forming a more accurate view of the comparative, as well as positive, state of Dissent.

COUNTIES.	1812.				1827.			
	Pres.	Ind.	Bapt.	Total.	Unitarian.	Ind.	Bapt.	Total.
Bedfordshire	0	4	16	20	0	7	21	28
Berkshire	1	12	8	21	0	14	11	25
Buckinghamshire	3	14	17	34	0	21	28	49
Cambridgeshire ..	0	24	20	44	1	22	27	50
Cheshire	12	20	5	37	14	26	5	45
Cornwall	0	28	7	35	0	32	12	44
Cumberland	15	7	5	27	0	16	1	17
Derbyshire	10	20	11	41	14	35	5	54
Devonshire	19	30	16	65	11	57	32	100
Dorsetshire	5	23	4	32	3	23	5	31
Durham	14	3	6	23	2	13	8	23
Essex	1	47	17	65	4	59	24	87
Gloucestershire..	3	17	16	36	4	35	31	70
Hampshire	2	26	17	45	4	30	25	59
Herefordshire ..	2	3	4	9	0	11	9	20
Hertfordshire....	1	13	10	24	1	21	13	35
Huntingdonshire	0	5	14	19	0	9	11	20
Kent	7	28	24	59	8	40	30	78
Lancashire.....	33	57	27	117	39	82	29	150
Carried forward	137	381	244	753	106	553	327	965

COUNTIES.	1812.				1827.			
	Pres.	Ind.	Bapt.	Total.	Unitarian.	Ind.	Bapt.	Total.
Brought forward	137	381	244	753	106	553	327	965
Leicestershire ..	4	11	17	32	4	15	13	32
Lincolnshire	3	21	22	46	4	20	31	55
Middlesex.....	20	53	33	106	10	90	55	155
Monmouthshire	0	9	15	24	0	24	29	53
Norfolk.....	3	10	20	33	6	20	32	58
Northamptonshire	0	18	16	34	1	35	40	76
Northumberland	32	7	5	49	2	6	3	11
Nottinghamshire	1	7	9	17	2	11	7	20
Oxfordshire	3	8	6	17	1	12	12	25
Rutlandshire	0	2	2	4	0	3	2	5
Shropshire.....	3	20	11	34	3	20	15	38
Somersetshire ..	6	29	15	50	7	47	34	88
Staffordshire....	4	22	6	32	7	31	16	54
Suffolk	5	26	16	47	5	32	35	72
Surrey	1	20	15	36	1	23	21	45
Sussex	2	7	16	25	7	29	13	49
Warwickshire ..	5	16	8	29	8	26	16	50
Westmoreland ..	2	4	3	9	1	10	0	11
Wiltshire	2	38	17	57	4	30	31	65
Worcestershire ..	3	4	9	16	6	10	22	38
Yorkshire	20	95	42	157	20	156	51	227
	252	799	532	1583	204	1051	750	1775

By some error in the Magazine, a false amount is given, but the true sum is as follows :—

Unitarian Congregations, frequently called Presbyterian	204
Independent	1203
Baptist	750
	2157

Wales is not included.

In reply to some strictures in the British Magazine,

it was observed, that Dissenters increased, from 1812 to 1829, at the ratio of fifty-three per cent., while the population increased, only twenty-six per cent. A statement so comprehensive and minute, required great labour and perseverance; but that it is defective, is neither doubtful nor surprising. Village congregations that have no settled pastor, are, in many instances, omitted; except in the returns of the Wesleyans, where they are included in the number of chapels and local preachers. The writer of these pages can bear witness, that in Hampshire and Yorkshire, with which he is best acquainted, numerous omissions occur. He has also been furnished by a minister of Monmouthshire, with the names and localities of twelve additional independent churches, which would raise the number in that county, from twenty-four to thirty-six; and it was asserted, that further research would prove them to amount to near fifty; which is so far confirmed, that a ministerial correspondent, in the middle of this year, says, the number is forty-one. Glamorganshire is wholly omitted, but a Welch minister gave the *names* of fifty congregations in that county; so that it may not seem quite incredible, when the same informant asserts, that instead of two hundred and nine Congregational churches in the Principality, there are nearly one thousand.

Thirty years ago, the Independents had only seventeen chapels in the six northern counties of Wales. Of these, all but two have been enlarged; and a hundred and fifty-seven new ones have been built. In the Principality, indeed, the progress of Dissent has been so great, that the Establishment is reduced to the state

of a West India regiment, whose officers have no troops.

The minor sects in England are frequently passed over as insignificant; but taken together, they are important. In the last annual meeting of the General Baptist connexion, held July, 1838, near Halifax, they gave an account of a hundred and twenty-one churches, and fourteen thousand members.

It is announced in the Congregational Magazine, that what are called Hyper-calvinistic congregations, are omitted, and these, in London and the larger towns, amount to a considerable number. The Sandemanians are little known to other denominations, and are usually omitted in the statistics of Dissenters, which thus become defective to the amount of the whole number of that body, which, however, is but small.

The Scotch Baptists equally escape notice.

The Swedenborgians, or Church of the new Jerusalem, at their twenty-seventh general conference, held in August, 1834, report forty-four societies, containing about fifteen hundred members, to whom must be added others residing in places where no *societies* are formed.

Of the Unitarian congregations, a defective estimate is made in the Congregational Magazine for January, 1833; for one of their own body, had, in 1819, asserted, that they were about three hundred; and it is not probable that they had suffered a decrease of one-third in so short a space of time. These congregations, however, are usually small.

Since the list in the Congregational Magazine was drawn up, the Irvingites have started into being as a

separate sect, and have added about sixty congregations, and almost as many chapels, to the number of those that are separate from the Establishment. The Brethren, or Catholics, not Roman, have many congregations in rooms which escape notice; for this sect attaches no importance to buildings, which they never procure, except when circumstances make it necessary. The Methodist Association also, has created many new congregations, which, though originally composed of members withdrawn from the old connexion, are gathering other elements, and swelling the number of those who worship in dissenting places, and have more of the dissenting spirit than is cherished by those who adhere to the original conference.

Some gentlemen in London took great pains, in the year 1834, to procure a more minute and accurate account, particularly specifying the communicants; because one of the King's ministers told a dissenting deputation, that the communicants were the true test of relative numbers, since many persons attended dissenting worship, who were by no means attached to their communion. These returns were given from no more than two hundred and three towns and villages, in twelve counties; and did not include London Bristol, Bath, Manchester, Bolton, Leeds, Birmingham, Sheffield, Halifax, Huddersfield, Leicester, Northampton, Norwich, Cambridge, Portsmouth, Plymouth, Exeter, and other places where the proportion is much in favour of the Dissenters.

	Places of Worship.	Hearers.	Communicants.	Scholars in Charity and Sunv. Schls.
Protestant Dissenters of all denominations, including Quakers..	634	231,701	47,276	75,756
Methodists	214	74,897	22,377	38,706
Total of Nonconformists	848	306,598	69,653	114,472
Church of England	330	166,099	9,625	47,247
Number of Nonconformists above the Church of England	518	140,499	60,028	67,225

The defects of the preceding estimate, cannot now be supplied; but with regard to London, a very important desideratum has been furnished by the London City Mission, in their magazine for the year 1838.

After the lapse of nine years, the Congregational Magazine for January, 1836, gave the following statement:—

NUMBER OF CONGREGATIONS IN EACH COUNTY.

Bedfordshire	76
Berkshire	88
Buckinghamshire	126
Cambridgeshire	90
Cheshire	141
Cornwall	322
Cumberland	129
Derbyshire	184
Devonshire	270
Dorsetshire	133
Durham	200
Essex	165
Gloucestershire	159
Hampshire	141
Carried forward	2,224

Brought forward	2,224
Herefordshire	65
Hertfordshire	61
Huntingdonshire	34
Kent	265
Lancashire	581
Leicestershire	161
Lincolnshire	314
London and Middlesex	306
Monmouthshire	93
Norfolk	206
Northamptonshire	161
Northumberland	137
Nottinghamshire	162
Oxfordshire	99
Rutland	14
Shropshire	164
Somersetshire	281
Staffordshire	211
Suffolk	132
Surrey	94
Sussex	98
Warwickshire	137
Westmoreland	38
Wiltshire	138
Worcestershire	100
Yorkshire	1,047
Wales, North and South	1,091
England and Wales	8,414

At a public meeting of the Church Rate Abolition Society, held May 8th, 1838, when Churchmen and Dissenters of various denominations were present, a member of Parliament said, "There are not quite eleven thousand places of worship belonging to the Establishment, and there are within thirty-five of that

number belonging to Dissenters, including the Catholics."*

The present numbers of Dissenters give rise to many important reflections. From the passing of the Toleration Act, in 1688, to the death of Queen Anne, in 1704, the liberties of Dissenters, were so insecure as to make it generally prudent to conceal their places of worship, and restrain their efforts. Daniel Neal, the historian of the Puritans, gave, in 1716, eleven hundred and seven as the total amount of their places of worship in England. After the lapse of sixty years, that is, in

* The following statement was recently given in an able work by the secretary of the British and Foreign School Society.

I. Church of England.

Number of Churches and Chapels, 11,825.

Orthodox, or High Church religious organs—Standard, John Bull, British Magazine, British Critic, Christian Remembrancer.

Evangelical, or Low Church—Record, News, Christian Observer, and Christian Guardian.

Raised for foreign missions, £78,000

II. Methodists.

1. Wesleyans. Number of Chapels, 2,818.
2. New Connexion. Primitive and other Methodists. Number of Chapels, 666. Total 3,484.

Organs — Watchman, Christian Advocate, and Methodist Magazine.

Raised for missionaries, £46,000.

III. Congregationalists.

1. Independents. Number of chapels, 1,840.
2. Baptists. Number of chapels, 1,349.
3. Calvinistic Methodists. Number of Chapels, 800. Total 3,989.

Organs — Patriot, Evangelical, Baptist, and Congregational Magazines, and Evangelical Register.

Raised for foreign missions, £72,500.

1776, they are reported as being only eleven more. In some parts, as for instance, in Middlesex, they had decreased. This was the period in which the Presbyterians departed from the faith of their forefathers, which change was ushered in by such pleadings for candour, and against bigotry, as afforded to many a specious pretext for conformity. Twenty years after, some imperfect lists, published in the Monthly Magazine, intimate a considerable increase. The History of Dissenters, in 1808, gave the total of dissenting places as rather more than two thousand, nearly twice as many as the preceding periods had exhibited. But the missionary spirit, at home and abroad, had then been in operation, and had produced important results. Several new and active sects had risen, and dissenting principles had begun to be valued for their tendency

IV. Sundries.

1. Unitarians. Number of chapels, 197. See Unitarian Chronicle, 1832, Christian Reformer.
2. Catholics. Number of chapels, 416. See Laity's Directory, 1835.
3. Jews. Number of synagogues, 12.
4. Quakers. Number of chapels, 396.
   Scotch Presbyterians, about 100 chapels.

	Congregations.	Hearers.
Congregationalists . .	1,840	
Baptists	1,350	
Scotch Presbyterians . .	60	
	3,250	1,300,000
Wesleyans of all classes .	3,500	1,400,000
Calvinistic Methodists . .	124	
Welch	615	
	7,489	3,000,000

to promote the highest interests of the kingdom of Christ. County associations, village preaching, and home missions, have multiplied congregations in every direction, while Sabbath schools are preparing a population fitted to receive the message of the Gospel, which every church now deems it a sacred duty to send, first to its own immediate neighbours, and ultimately to the ends of the earth.

In describing the external state of Dissenters, if we direct our attention to their rank and wealth, it will be rather as a question of fact, and in deference to the opinions of others, than from a conviction of the importance of this subject to a religious people. The testimony of Scripture and of history proves, that the mental and moral character of a church is of far greater consequence than its wealth or station in society. Very shortly after the apostles had said to Christians, "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world? For not many mighty or noble are called;" Tertullian asserted, "We are of yesterday, and have filled all places." The Wesleyan Methodists, whose origin was, perhaps, as strongly marked with poverty as that of any communion, have shown that this had no injurious effect on their progress, their exertions, their influence, or their ultimate rank and weight in society.

In a former period, it was observed, that the men of rank and title who first espoused the cause of the Nonconformists, soon veered off; or, when they were removed by death, were seldom succeeded in the church by those who inherited their titles and estates. During the last thirty years, there were few of this

class left behind, and as few were gained; but the immense increase in the wealth of the country, by means of manufactures and commerce, created a new order of men, who rose from mediocrity, or poverty, to far greater incomes than those which were possessed by the titled Nonconformists of the first era of Dissent. The more simple and frugal habits which this class of Dissenters had learned in early life, were too often exchanged for expense and show; but, on the whole, they were still able, and in many instances, proved themselves willing, to devote larger sums to the cause of religion, than were ever given by Dissenters when they could boast of titled men. The contributions to the London Missionary Society, and other kindred institutions, supported chiefly by Dissenters, demonstrate that they have among them money enough to accomplish any objects which they have hearts to devise.

That most difficult part of their external machinery, the building of places of worship, has made immense progress; and of the numerous chapels that have risen up, during the period of which we write, few, if any, are so small as those that were erected for the most eminent of the two thousand Nonconformists. Within the last twenty years, many very large and rather elegant buildings, have attested both the zeal and the ability of the congregations. The Wesleyans have made immense progress in this line, in which, however, the metropolis is rather behind the country.

It has, indeed, been asserted, that the increase of chapels, however large and expensive, is no proof of the abundant means of Dissenters, because they are involved in immense debt. But as one bankrupt

attracts more attention than twenty solvent tradesmen, chapels that are in debt, are obtruded on the notice of the public, in order to obtain relief; while those which need none, are, for that reason, unnoticed. Small country towns have erected buildings at the expense of several thousands, and paid for them immediately, in a style of princely liberality that would astonish strangers. The debts, too, have furnished proofs of wealth, as well as of poverty, which we have seen in the noble exertion of the Independents in Wales, to pay off the debts on their places of worship, for which nearly twenty thousand pounds have been raised. A chapel building fund, for the erection of places for dissenting worship in London, has commenced its operations by building a large and handsome place at Lambeth.

Sect. III.—*The Labours of Ministers and their Support.*

These are associated together by the Redeemer, when he says, "The labourer is worthy of his meat;" and no friend to religion, or its ministers, would wish to separate what God has thus joined together. The duties and toils, both of ministers and private Christians, must always increase in proportion to the advancement of religion. The mere fact of constant accessions to the church, imposes on a dissenting pastor an onerous and anxious duty, delightful, indeed, but most imperative, and incapable of being devolved upon others. This has, during the last thirty years, been felt in its full force, for most of the churches have greatly increased.

The disposition to decline three services, and to

preach only in the morning and evening of the Lord's day, has been steadily gaining ground; but the more laborious preparation for the pulpit has increased in equal proportion, and the exposition of the Scriptures has become a general practice, by which the labour of the minister in his study is immensely augmented. Lectures on given subjects are become more frequent; and, as these are designed to counteract infidelity, Popery, or Socinianism, and are sometimes delivered on the working days, they form a considerable tax on the minister's time, and on his strength, both physical and mental.

The increase of Sabbath schools has diminished the labour of the pastor, who formerly spent much time in catechising; but where he takes his due measure of interest in these schools, they make frequent calls on him, to address both children and teachers, and to hold meetings, as well as preach sermons for their support. To a certain extent, this observation applies to the effect of the Christian Instruction Society, and the Home and City Missions.

But foreign missions are now so closely associated with the Christian church, that almost every minister, who is awake to his duty, spends some considerable portion of his life in cherishing auxiliary missionary societies. It is to be regretted, that so much time and money should be spent in travelling to preach at anniversaries, except when missionaries, returning to recruit their health, visit the churches, and "declare what God has wrought by them among the Gentiles." That some incidental benefit arises out of this call for a stimulating novelty is unquestionable; but the minis-

ter's increased knowledge of other churches is often procured at the expense of his own charge.

The New Marriage Act has brought an unexpected augmentation of labour on ministers. For, though the law admits of solemnizing marriage, as a civil act, before the registrar alone, Dissenters are either not generally weaned from Popish ideas of marriage, or they think it so necessary to yield to popular prejudice, that many of their places of worship are registered for the performance of the marriage ceremony, and the ministers are generally requested to perform a religious service on the occasion. In the more populous districts, this will become a very serious tax on a minister's time and attention.

If, during the last age, preaching three times on the Lord's day has somewhat declined, the extra services for religious and benevolent societies are not the only modes in which the labours of ministers have been rendered equal to those of their predecessors; for the press has more generally been employed than in former eras. Periodical publications have immensely increased; almost every communion has one or more devoted to its interest; and while they are usually edited by ministers, these look to their brethren for the articles which form the staple of works that exert an immense influence over the public mind. The industry of the present, or, rather, of the past, generation of dissenting pastors, is attested by the numerous volumes, chiefly theological, which have issued from the press; and which show that authors among us are more numerous, if less voluminous, than in former times. Single sermons, or even whole

volumes, may be thought to prove little, as they merely transfer to the press what had been prepared for the pulpit; but even these demonstrate, and often to great advantage, the mental force employed in the ministry of the Gospel. Numerous, however, are the treatises on every subject connected with religion and sacred literature, which attest the diligence of ministers, and their solicitude for the young, for the kingdom of Christ in the world, and for the defence of truth against error in all its forms.

The support of the dissenting ministry has varied but little, during the last thirty years, from the ratio of former periods. That support has always been scanty; and though Dissenters have recently increased their contributions, to maintain the numerous benevolent institutions that have sprung up, the pastor, who has not a large congregation, or a private fortune, or some other source of income, must be much embarrassed in bringing up a family.

London has, for ages, set the example of generous solicitude for poor ministers; and, unhappily, the country has been slow to follow. The fund boards of the three denominations have been, by annual collections in the metropolitan churches, supplied with the sums which have been remitted to country ministers; who find, even a small addition to their income, a great relief amidst the embarrassments with which they have to struggle.

The Associate Fund, or Ministers' Friend, is the designation of a society formed in London, in the year 1822, to include a greater number of churches than those which collect annually for the Independent

Fund; and to extend relief to a wider range. The annual income of this society is short of a thousand pounds; but it has distributed between four and five thousand pounds, in small sums, to many deserving ministers, whose congregations are too poor to give them adequate support. Here, again, it is to be regretted, that the country, which receives, does not co-operate in liberality with London, which gives the relief.

The Congregational School may be deemed an addition to the means of supporting the dissenting ministry. The school is supported by voluntary contributions, and has educated nearly two hundred children.

A similar institution, called the Northern Congregational School, at Silcoats, near Wakefield, Yorkshire, arose out of a kind of proprietary boarding school for the sons of Dissenters, which afforded a reduction in terms to the children of ministers. But when this institution was given up, the premises were taken, about 1830, for a school for the sons of ministers and missionaries, at a low rate. The subscriptions of the benevolent in the counties of York and Lancaster, enable the institution to charge the parents but fifteen pounds per annum; and in the case of deceased ministers, the son is educated for ten pounds annually. A fourth part of the pupils are the sons of missionaries. This institution has not, however, received that extended support which can be regarded as a promise of the perpetuity which it deserves.

Other charitable foundations for education might be mentioned, such as the Protestant Dissenters' Charity

Schools, in Jewin Crescent, London; at Maze Pound, Southwark; and in Wood Street, Spitalfields, founded by Dr. Watts and others, in 1717, and many in various parts of the country, which continue to afford instruction to the rising generation at the expense of Dissenters.

The Dissenting Grammar School, at Mill Hill, is a dissenting boarding school upon a large scale, in which Independents and Baptists are united. But the sons of ministers are admitted at a reduced rate, and those of peculiar promise are educated gratuitously.

The profits arising from the sale of the Evangelical Magazine, may be reckoned among the means of supporting the dissenting ministry, because nearly a thousand pounds are annually distributed among the widows of ministers.

That which was at first called the *Regium Donum*, or Royal Gift, and afterwards, the Parliamentary Grant, must be introduced among the pecuniary resources of the dissenting ministry. But as the voluntary principle became more popular, objections were made to the reception of this grant; and some of the dissenting bodies passed public resolutions against what appeared to them to degrade the recipients of the bounty into the rank of ministers of religion salaried by the state. These objections were mentioned in the senate, when the annual vote was passed, for no administration has yet altered the long-established practice. To defend themselves in continuing to accept this trust, the almoners published, in 1837, the following statement:—

"The subject of the *Regium Donum* and Parliamentary Grant to the poor dissenting ministers of England and Wales, has engaged a considerable share of the attention of the Dissenters, in their late proceedings relative to the assertion of their principles and the redress of their grievances. By some persons, this Grant has been denounced as one of the evils of which the Dissenters have a right to complain, the reception of which they have pronounced to be "inexpedient and improper;" and the immediate discontinuance of which, they have thought a fit object for memorial or petition to the government and the legislature.

"Under a full conviction that the strong feeling of disapprobation, which has been thus manifested against the Grant, is altogether founded in ignorance or misapprehension of its true character, we deem it to be due to the sovereigns who have successively bestowed this mark of the royal favour; to the parliament which has, for some time past, continued it on behalf of the crown; and to the distributors who have had the honour of acting during so long a period as the almoners of the royal bounty to their necessitous brethren, to endeavour to rectify the prevalent mistakes, by submitting, to the consideration of the dissenting public, a brief statement of the origin and nature of this fund.

"For the only authentic account of its origin, we are indebted to Dr. Edmund Calamy, who was a contemporary of its benevolent royal founder, and one of the first-appointed trustees. In the 'Memoirs' of his 'Life and Times,' lately published (vol. ii.

pp. 465—467,) under the year 1723, he writes as follows:—

"'About this time his Majesty (George I.) was pleased, in a private way, to give the Dissenters a considerable taste of his royal bounty and kind regard to them by an annual allowance. The first motion for it was made by Mr. Daniel Burgess, who had, for some time, been secretary to the Princess of Wales. He, of his own head, and out of good will to those among whom he had had his education, moved for something of that kind to the Lord Viscount Townshend, who readily fell in with it, and afterwards discoursed his brother Walpole about it, who also concurred. Upon its being mentioned to the King, he was very free to it, and soon ordered £500 to be paid out of the treasury for the use and behoof of the poor widows of dissenting ministers. And some time after, £500 was, upon application made on that behalf, ordered to be paid each half year for the assisting either ministers or their widows, that wanted help, or to be applied to any such uses as the distributors thought to be most for their interest.* An order was each half year obtained by Mr. Burgess, payable to Mr. Ellis, a surgeon; and when Mr. Burgess received it, he paid it to the following persons, viz., Mr. William Tong, Mr. Jeremy Smith, Mr. Merril, of Hampstead, Mr. Thomas Rey-

* It is not certain whether the antecedent to the words "their interest" be the "ministers" and "widows" of dissenting ministers, or "the distributors;" if the latter, it is unquestionable that Dr. Calamy intended "their interest" only in the sense of their being representatives of, and agents for, necessitous "ministers or their widows."

nolds, Mr. Matthew Clarke, Dr. Joshua Oldfield, Mr. John Evans, Mr. William Harris, and myself; and as any of these persons died, the survivors chose another in his room.'

"From this simple statement, it clearly appears that, when first made, the Grant was one of pure charity, designed for the relief of the poor widows of dissenting ministers. The same compassionate feeling which dictated the first act of royal beneficence, prompted, shortly afterwards, the augmentation of the Grant, and the extension of its benefits to poor dissenting ministers.*

"There is not to be discovered, in this transaction, the slightest trace of any political feeling or purpose. No conditions were imposed on the part of the crown when the money was paid, nor were any stipulations entered into by the trustees and the recipients, which virtually pledged them to the support of the political principles and measures of the existing administration. The prime minister did not even reserve to himself a voice in the appointment of the distributors, to secure their subserviency. They were originally chosen without his interference; and the vacancies, which have since occurred, have been successively

* When or why the Grant was at length confined to "ministers," the present distributors have no means of ascertaining. They received their trust with this long-established limitation. It appears to them probable, that this alteration in the objects of the royal bounty was made, upon the establishment, a century ago, of "The Widows' Fund," a noble monument of the liberality of the "Three Denominations," raised principally by the zealous and generous exertions of ministers associated in the distribution of the royal charity.

filled by the survivors at their own discretion; the appointment being, however, always made in reference to the age, character, public and official station, or generally acknowledged usefulness in the several denominations, of the ministers chosen into the trust.

"The trustees have never, in any part of their public conduct, evinced a disposition to truckle to the minister of state for the time being. In seasons of political excitement, they have not only asserted their independence, but have never scrupled to oppose existing administrations when they have judged their measures to be injurious to the Protestant Dissenters, or inimical to the public good. They fearlessly challenge the world to point out a single instance in which their charge as dispensers of the royal bounty has weakened their attachment to their principles as Nonconformists, or cooled the ardour of their zeal in the cause of civil and religious freedom. They have, from the first, stood in the foremost ranks of those who have laboured to remove the unjust restrictions imposed upon Protestant Dissenters, and to obtain the enlargement of their liberties.*

"The distributors repel the insinuation, that in undertaking the charge of this charitable Grant from the crown and the parliament, they are acting in vio-

* In the only case, from the foundation of the Grant, in which political feelings disturbed the purity of its distribution, the body of the distributors threw up their appointment; nor would they resume it, until, on a change of administration, it was acknowledged, that the office was one of mere charity, and neither a reward of *past*, nor a pledge of *future*, adherence to the ministers of the crown. The case alluded to was in the feverish crisis of the first French revolution.

lation of any acknowledged principle of Dissent. In their estimation, it is in no way opposed to the doctrine which they hold as firmly as any of their brethren, and for which most of them have, in their public character, pleaded as zealously, at least, as any ministers of the three denominations, that Christianity should be supported by the free-will offerings of its professors. The Grant is not an endowment to congregations, nor even an annuity to ministers. It is apportioned to the relief of the necessitous, as cases of necessity arise. In many instances, it is given to such as from old age and infirmity have retired from the pastoral office. It is, therefore, essentially different from a grant of the state for directly religious uses. And the distributors maintain, on historic grounds, that this bounty of the sovereign is in no respect a fund created by the compulsory taxation of the people for the maintenance of any system of Christian worship.

"Formerly, the kings of England, on their accession to the throne, became possessed of large hereditary revenues, out of which were defrayed the expenses of the royal establishment, a great part of the charges of the executive government, and such charitable donations, whether of a temporary or a permanent nature, as the sovereign might deem it proper to bestow. From this personal fund was paid, during the reigns of George I. and George II., the Royal Grant to poor dissenting ministers. On the accession of George III., it was thought adviseable to substitute, for these hereditary revenues, a fixed annual sum, equivalent to them in amount, which obtained the technical name of the civil list. The charges which had been usually

defrayed out of the rents and profits of the royal demesnes, including the Grant to dissenting ministers, and other permanent charities, were now paid out of the new fund. In 1804, some alterations were made in the civil list itself. Owing to heavy war-expenses, and other causes, it was found inadequate to all the purposes for which it had been designed, and the parliament, on the application of the then chancellor of the exchequer, voted an annual addition to it of £60,000. In order, however, to simplify the public accounts, and to prevent the civil list falling into arrear, it was at the same time settled to take from it certain payments, to the amount of £135,000 per annum, and to provide for them separately by an annual vote of the House of Commons. Among the permanent charges thus transferred, were certain royal charities, including the bounty to the poor French refugee clergy and laity, and to the dissenting ministers of England and Wales. By this change, the *Regium Donum* became a Parliamentary Grant. Its character was not, however, changed. The parliament became, in fact, the king's almoner, and pledged its faith to continue the royal charities, which were considered as permanent charges on the crown estates. Nor did the parliament enter into this compact without securing ample means to fulfil it. When called upon to add the large sum of £60,000 per annum to the civil list, it was stated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that so favourable to the country had been the bargain for the crown-lands, that, after making up the full amount of the civil list, with this increase, and defraying all the expenses chargeable upon it, there would remain

a considerable balance in favour of the nation, to be appropriated to the public service.

"From these facts, it is apparent, that the *Regium Donum*, or Parliamentary Grant, is not derived from the compulsory taxation of the people. And in this view of the case, the Dissenters have no cause to complain of this Grant as a forced contribution to support religion. To attempt, under a mistaken notion of its nature and purpose, to procure its discontinuance, is, therefore, as unjust as, if the attempt were to succeed, it would be injurious to the least protected, and a most deserving portion of the dissenting ministry. If any necessitous dissenting minister have conscientious objections to participate in the benefit of this charity, he will do well to refuse it; and none will be more ready to respect and honour his scruples of conscience, however unfounded, than the distributors themselves. But those who on speculative principles raise an objection to the Grant, act, as the distributors must be allowed to think, neither wisely nor charitably, in seeking to deprive a large and numerous class of Christian ministers, whose independence and uprightness none will or can call in question, of pecuniary supplies, which, though small in amount, are of importance to the comfort of themselves and their families, and on the expected continuance of which, their habits and plans of life may be in some degree calculated. The privations and sufferings of many of these servants of the churches are little known to the Christian public. From a virtuous delicacy, and from regard to the dignity of their sacred profession, they shrink from proclaiming

their necessities to the world, and submitting them to be canvassed by large bodies of men, although associated for charitable purposes. The portion of the royal bounty unostentatiously bestowed upon such meritorious labourers in the Gospel, (whether still engaged in public duties, or laid aside by the hand of Divine Providence,) is the more acceptable and efficacious, on account of the honourable confidence which they know by experience they can place in the distributors.

"Whatever may be pleaded in the excitement of debate, it is plain, that no adequate substitute (with regard not so much to its amount, as to the impartiality of its apportionment) could be raised by the Dissenters, for the Royal or Parliamentary Grant; which, as it has been unconditionally, graciously, and generously given, it would be perverse and ungrateful to refuse. The distributors, in the spirit, as they conceive, of this munificence of the crown, have ever dispensed it amongst ministers of the three denominations, and other Protestant dissenting ministers not falling strictly under this description, but recommended by both their necessity and their character, without any stipulations political or theological, expressed or implied. They have received the royal bounty as a simple charity, designed to express the sense which the august family now upon the throne of these realms, is pleased to entertain of the zeal and exertions of the Protestant Dissenters of the earlier part of the last century, on behalf of its accession to the British crown. They have always contemplated the Grant as having reference to the past and not to

the future, and as laying no obligation whatever either upon them or the recipients, with regard to their faith or worship, or the exercise of civil franchises and political duties. They feel it to be an honour to be selected as the almoners of a great and disinterested charity. They look back with satisfaction to all their regularly appointed predecessors in the royal trust,—men of high name for learning, talents, character, independence, and distinguished usefulness in their several denominations. Differing widely in religious sentiments, and never concealing the difference, they take pleasure in acting together in the discharge of a charitable trust. They affect no secrecy; they fear no publicity: although they judge that it would be a violation of the delicacy and respect due to virtuous poverty, to proclaim the names of the recipients, unless they should be called upon to do so by the legislature or the government, the only authorities to which in this case they can bow. Their own names are given to the world as a pledge for the uprightness of the distribution. Unmoved by misrepresentation and clamour, they will continue to exercise this trust for the benefit of their needy brethren, as long as it shall seem fit to his Majesty's government and the Commons' House of Parliament to fulfil the generous design and intent of the successive princes of the House of Brunswick. Personal interest in the distribution they have none. They dare to appeal to the Searcher of Hearts in testimony of their invariable purpose and endeavour to preserve the charity in its simplicity and purity, to dispense it with impartiality, and to make it as serviceable as possible to their

brethren, suffering amidst, or after, useful labours, under the trials of adversity. They cannot bring themselves to fear that a grant which has been generously made, and faithfully administered, and which has proved itself, under the divine blessing, an occasion of joy and gratitude to hundreds of Christian teachers, whose earthly lot has been one continued scene of privation and hardship, will under any pretence be withheld; but should this be the unhappy result of the interference of certain Dissenters, they must ever lament the injury thus done to a numerous class of indigent ministers of the Gospel,—the blow being the more felt because inflicted by the hand that should have been extended for protection—; and will fervently pray that he whose providence is over all, and is especially engaged towards them that devote their lives to his glory, may open other sources for the relief of these his servants, not indeed more pure, but better guarded against the fluctuation and even caprice of public opinion.

JOHN HUMPHRYS, LL.D.
JOHN PYE SMITH, D.D.
THOMAS REES, LL.D.
F. A. COX, D.D., LL.D.
ROBERT ASPLAND.
JOHN CLAYTON, AM.
GEORGE PRITCHARD.
W. H. MURCH.
THOMAS MADGE."

The sums thus appropriated are not given to congregations, to enable them to make up a salary; but are sent to the minister himself, for his own private relief.

A society for the relief of aged and infirm ministers, was formed in the year 1818, and though not extensively known or supported, has received large sums to

distribute among those who are worn out in the labours of the ministry.

Lady Hewley's charity, which was designed by the benevolent donor to be an important means of carrying on the cause of religion among Dissenters, has been, for some years, a subject of litigation in Chancery. But the proceeds of the estates, which are somewhat under three thousand pounds per annum, furnish assistance in various ways to dissenting congregations.

Funds for the relief of the widows of ministers, exist in various parts of the kingdom. That which is known by the name of the Widows' Fund, was instituted in London, in 1733, for the relief of the widows of ministers of the Presbyterian, Independent, and Baptist denominations. An annual sermon is preached in a chapel belonging to each denomination in its turn, and the preacher is thus constituted a member of the society. The most distinguished men of the three bodies, have performed this service. The sums vested annually, have risen from five pounds to the English widows, and three to the Welch, to fifteen pounds to the former, and eleven to the latter. But an increasing indisposition to unite with the heterodox Presbyterians, has latterly diminished the resources of the society. The Protestant Union obtained its name from the union of a few of the established ministry with Independents, Baptists, and Calvinistic Methodists, for the relief of their widows and children. As the annuities are subscribed for by the living members, it scarcely deserves a place here, but it has received donations

and legacies, which somewhat modify its character. It has property to the amount of nearly twenty thousand pounds; and the children of the members have a claim when they leave no widow. In some counties there are kindred institutions supported by the ministers and churches.

It is doubtful whether the prizes offered for treatises should be ranked among the external or internal affairs of the dissenting body. They were intended to promote the interests of religion, but they may fairly be considered external inducements. Dr. Conquest, a physician in London, offered a prize of one hundred guineas for the best essay on the Evil of Covetousness, and the Duty of Giving Liberally. The adjudicators were the Rev. Dr. John Pye Smith, and the Honourable and Rev. Baptist Noel, who awarded the prize to Rev. John Harris, of Epsom. The competitors were very numerous; some within the Establishment, and others belonging to various dissenting bodies. The prize essay, which was published under the title of "Mammon," had an unprecedented sale, and produced many happy effects, though it was attacked by two of the established clergy, in a work entitled, "Anti-Mammon," which censured some expressions in the successful work, and opposed to its prevailing spirit a hyper-calvinistic train of thinking.

Another prize of fifty guineas was offered for the best essay on the Claims of our Seamen upon the Benevolent Attentions of Christians, and was won by the same person, who published his work under the title of "Britannia." Sir Cullen Eardley Smith offered a prize of fifty pounds for the best essay on

Schism, its Nature, and Evils. The successful competitor was Rev. Dr. Hoppus, who had been the Independent minister in Carter Lane, Doctors' Commons, whence he had been ejected by the Socinian party, though the congregation was originally orthodox. He is now professor of Logic and Mental Philosophy, at University College, London. A society for promoting the religious and intellectual improvement of young men, announced a prize of one hundred guineas for an essay in recommendation of their object. To the Rev. Dr. Cox, Baptist minister at Hackney, the premium was awarded; and he published the work under the title of "Our Young Men." Two other prizes are now offered; the first, for the best essay on Missions; and the other, for the best treatise on the Employment of Lay Agency in the Church of Christ.

The Suit for the Recovery of Lady Hewley's Charity.

A memoir of this celebrated benefactress to Dissenters was given, in the first period of the History of Dissenters;* but as the funds which she bequeathed fell into the hands of the Unitarians, and were diverted from their legitimate object, a suit for their recovery was instituted, which forms an important occurrence in the last period. The writer of these pages, on going to reside in Yorkshire, was informed that there were valuable documents, relative to this charity, in the hands of a minister near Hull. These were obtained, and submitted to the inspection of a dissenting barrister in London, whose opinion was not sufficiently encouraging to lead to any immediate step; but they

* Vol. i. 505. Second Edition.

contributed to the ultimate prosecution and success of the suit.

The Commissioners of Charities, appointed by Lord Brougham's Bill, made a Report which opened a door for legal proceedings. By these, it appears, that the St. Saviour Gate Meeting House, in York, was partly built and endowed by Lady Hewley. She also founded and endowed in her lifetime, an hospital, or alms house, for ten poor women. Some years before her death, she devoted the principal part of her property "for the preaching of Christ's Holy Gospel," and for the maintenance of "godly preachers;" for "the relief of godly persons in distress," and for the support of her alms house. For this purpose, she executed two sets of endowment-deeds. The first, bearing date 1701, appointed seven trustees, Richard Stretton, Nathaniel Gould, Thomas Marriot, John Bridges, Thomas Nisbett, James Wyndlow, and Thomas Coulton, who was Dr. Coulton, the first minister of St. Saviour Gate Meeting House. To these were conveyed the manors of Kelling Hall, Brey Croft, Haya Park, and other lands, in the county of York, to relieve poor and godly preachers, and their widows, and aid the education of young men, never more than five, "to be preachers of Christ's Holy Gospel," and towards relieving godly persons in distress, chiefly in York and Yorkshire, and the Northern counties. The second set of endowment-deeds was executed in 1707, to provide for the alms house; and certain lands, in the manor of Eston, in the county of York, were given to provide catechisms, and secure an income of 60*l.* per annum. A book of rules and orders, signed by Lady Hewley's

own hand, was to be kept. Mr. Edward Bowles' catechism was to be said by the alms women. New trustees were appointed, for the first time, in 1755, when James Wyndlow was the sole survivor of the original trustees; and the Rev. John Witter, a dissenting minister, and Robert Moody, a Trinitarian Dissenter, and Richard Gilpin Sawrey, were the only successors to the original trustees. The new trustees appointed, were Samuel Shore, Ayman Rich, and Thomas Lee, persons of wealth and influence. They were the patrons of the Rev. Newcome Cappe, a young minister who had been educated at a college for orthodox dissenting ministers, and who was appointed assistant to Mr. Hotham, the aged minister of St. Saviour Gate Chapel. Mr. Hotham, dying soon after, Mr. Cappe became sole minister. He quickly became an Arian, and finally, what is now called, a Unitarian. He was the favourite of the trustees, who raised his allowance from the charity, to sixty pounds a year, which was twenty pounds more than Mr. Hotham had received. Mr. Cappe was made one of the sub-trustees, or managers of the alms house. He died in 1799, and was succeeded by the Rev. Charles Wellbeloved, a Unitarian, whose allowance from the charity was raised to eighty pounds per annum. Mr. Moody, the Trinitarian trustee, before mentioned, made some strenuous efforts to prevent the alienation of the property to Socinian purposes; but was induced to desist, from dread of the delay and expense of a Chancery suit. But his papers on this subject were those alluded to, and have contributed to the accomplishment of his honest purpose. An application was

made by the managers of Rotherham College, for assistance for its students, from the funds bequeathed by Lady Hewley for that object; but the trustees replied that they had no funds.

When the Commissioners of Charities visited York, in 1826, a formal complaint was made to them of the misapplication of this charity. They examined the Rev. Charles Wellbeloved, and made a Report, dated Jan. 27, 1827, stating that it was at least questionable whether Unitarians could properly receive exhibitions under this charity, and that the question ought to be submitted to the consideration of a court of equity.

But as the Commissioners did not take any step in the affair, the expense of a Chancery suit deterred from any attempt, till certain occurrences at Manchester caused several friends of orthodoxy to venture on the arduous contest. A hundred gentlemen of the Socinian creed gave a dinner at a tavern to Mr. Grundy, on his ceasing to be their minister, when they presented him with a silver tea service. Speeches were delivered on the occasion, lauding Unitarianism, and condemning orthodox opinions. These being reported in the newspapers, drew forth replies, in which the Socinians were reproached for perverting and abusing Lady Hewley's charity. "The Manchester Socinian Controversy," contains the charges and defences that were published on that occasion. The Evangelical Magazine observed, "That the Unitarians, as a body, most flagrantly violate the principles of moral integrity, by the mal-administration of trust-property, to the support of their own system. A list of the chapels occupied by Unitarians in Cheshire,

Lancashire, Derbyshire, and the West Riding of Yorkshire, was given, amounting to eighty, of which, at least, sixty-nine were originally orthodox." The Monthly Repository said, "It is now seriously proposed to the evangelical world to try to rob Unitarians of their meeting-houses. It would be ridiculous to argue against the principle assumed in the menace; it would be worse than ridiculous to say a word upon the result of the meditated legal process. Let the Calvinists begin their holy war, and they will then understand the signs of the times."

Mr. Moody's papers were now once more examined; and the result was, that the Attorney General exhibited an information in Chancery, June 18, 1830, which was amended December 15, 1831, against the Socinian trustees, at the relation of Thomas Wilson, of London, Joseph Reed, of Wincobank, George Hadfield and John Chapham, of Leeds, and Joseph Hodgson, of Halifax, to recover the trust property, estimated at nearly three thousand pounds per annum, from the hands of Unitarians, that it might be devoted exclusively to the support of sentiments accordant with those of the donor.

The defendants admitted, that all the books kept by the original trustees, and their immediate successors, prior to the year 1729, were lost; as were also those kept between the years 1732 and 1762. They, at first, refused to give an account of their religious belief; but, compelled by the court, they almost all admitted that they were Unitarians. A commission of Chancery sat at York, to examine evidence; and Dr. John Pye Smith, and Dr. James Bennett, gave their

opinion, that Mr. Edward Bowles' Catechism was Trinitarian. The Rev. James Turner, of Knutsford, the Rev. Thomas Scales, of Leeds, and the Rev. Manning Walker, of Bolton, who had been twenty years a Unitarian minister, were examined on behalf of the relators, as were the Rev. John Kenrick, and the Rev. Samuel Duckingfield Derbyshire, and the Rev. John Grundy, on the part of the trustees.

After the information and answers had been laid before the Vice Chancellor, and Lord Chancellor Brougham, the cause was heard before the Vice Chancellor, on the 18th, 19th, and 23d days of December, 1833; and he gave a decree, bearing date December 23, 1833, that Unitarians, not being proper objects of Lady Hewley's Charity, Unitarians should not be allowed to be trustees. The proceeds of the estates had been paid into court while the suit was pending; and from the sum of ten thousand pounds, which had thus accrued, the costs of the parties were to be allowed. The Vice Chancellor made great use of the Unitarian version of the New Testament, in proof of the opposition between the sentiments of the trustees and those of Lady Hewley.

An appeal from the decree was made by the trustees, to the Lord Chancellor Brougham, who called in to his assistance, Mr. Justice Littledale, and Mr. Baron Parke; but after the hearing on the 26th, 27th, 28th, and 29th days of June, 1834, the cause was adjourned; and Lord Brougham going out of office, the appeal came on to be heard anew, before the Lord Chancellor Lyndhurst, assisted by Mr. Baron Alderson, and Mr. Justice Patteson, on the 17th and 18th of February,

1835, when the hearing was again adjourned, in consequence of Lord Lyndhurst's retirement from office. The solicitors for the relators, and the respondents, gave a written engagement, that, if Lord Lyndhurst would hear the appeal, either with or without the assistance of any of his Majesty's judges, the respective parties would give to his lordship's judgment, delivered after quitting office, the same effect and no farther, as it would have had in the event of its being delivered by him while in possession of the great seal.

The appeal was heard on the 11th and 15th of April, 1835; and on the 5th of February, 1836, Mr. Baron Alderson delivered the joint opinion of himself and Mr. Justice Patteson, expressing the concurrence of those two judges in the decision of the Vice Chancellor. Lord Lyndhurst, after fully stating his reasons, affirmed the decree of the Vice Chancellor.

The trustees, after a short pause, gave notice of an appeal against this decree to the House of Lords.

CHAPTER VI.

THE INTERNAL OR RELIGIOUS STATE OF DISSENTERS.

The history of Dissenters is so much identified with that of religion, that this chapter may be said to contain the essence of the whole volume. If those who expect it to be proportionably copious and perfect, should censure it for omissions and defects, they should remember that general history cannot imitate the minuteness of annals. The standard by which we form our estimate of the religion of a people, will vary according to the character of our own; but a Dissenter will appeal to the Divine word, and inquire how far the principles, spirit, and conduct of his communion accord with the inspired memorials of the first churches of Christ.

With purity of communion the earliest Christian societies commenced, as a church is separated from the world by regenerating grace; and the first departure from the sanctity of the Christian character was visited by that judgment on Ananias and Sapphira, which proclaimed the irrevocable sentence, "If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." The promiscuous communion of the Church of England having

formed one of the chief reasons of Dissent; the Independents and Baptists, who constitute the larger part of the dissenting body, have always maintained, that, "Except a man be born again, he cannot, with propriety, be admitted into the visible kingdom of God." Those Methodists who adhere to their original partiality for the Establishment, are less scrupulous with regard to admission to the Lord's table; but if, as some fear, the discipline of the dissenting churches is relaxed, they still *avowedly* exclude from their communion all who deny the great essential truths of the Gospel, who do not profess to have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit, or who fall into gross sin. For any of these causes, the richest, as well as the poorest, would be excluded; and the censors of Dissenters blame them, rather for inquisitorial strictness than for relaxation of morals.

In one point, the revolution of human affairs has produced a change which may be pronounced an improvement. For though it never was a rule with dissenting churches to exclude from the Lord's table, avowed members of the Establishment, it is only of late, that such persons have been found to ask communion with Dissenters, which is now not unfrequently granted to such as are known to be genuine Christians, though not Dissenters. The right of admission *on the ground of belonging to another church*, is restricted to the members of such churches as admit to the communion on a profession of regeneration; and, therefore, a person would not be admitted to the Lord's table among evangelical Dissenters, merely

because he was a communicant in the Establishment, where this is no test even of moral character, much less of Christian experience; but when persons of other sects, whether dissenting or established, are known to be genuine Christians, they are cordially admitted to occasional communion, by all Independent, and by some Baptist churches.

As the character of the ministry marks that of the church, Dissenters have, for the last thirty years, paid anxious attention to the piety, as well as the abilities, of those whom they admit to the pastoral office. A person educated in an orthodox dissenting college, must first have been admitted into a church, as one born of God; and be recommended by the pastor and flock as a man distinguished for piety and gifts, and a desire to be useful in the service of Christ. If, during their studies, any of them forfeit this character, they are expelled, as unworthy of the ministry. Those who are chosen to the pastorate, hold their office during good behaviour, and cannot retain it with a stain on their character. The few who enter the dissenting ministry without being educated at any of the seminaries, are usually men who have been distinguished by their superior devotedness to the cause of religion, and their natural or acquired gifts. A divine call to the work is considered indispensable; but this is judged of by the fitness of the individual, his own preference for the ministry, and the conduct of Providence in opening the door. Dissenting ministers are expected to be men of study, abstaining from worldly amusements, and devoting themselves to the care of their flocks.

A hunting, or shooting, or card-playing parson is not known, and would not be tolerated in any class of evangelical Dissenters.

It must be confessed, however, that the admission of strangers into dissenting pulpits is far too easy; and the influence of popular preaching is so great, that men are sometimes chosen to the pastoral office, with a culpable neglect of inquiry into their previous character and history. By this means, mere adventurers, or students who have been expelled from colleges for immorality, have obtained settlements of which they were utterly unworthy; and though the evil is almost invariably temporary, and usually very short lived, since detection leads to expulsion, sufficient mischief is done to punish the churches for their recklessness and want of deference to the judgment of their brethren. As what are called falling stars attract, for the time, more notice than the genuine luminaries of heaven, a few instances of worthless ministers among Dissenters, have been sufficient to open the mouths of their enemies, who were willing to forget that these scandals were notorious in proportion as they were rare. The sufferings which Dissenters have endured from this source, are, perhaps, the only remedy for their fault.

To churches which admit into their communion none but those who profess to be born again by the Word and Spirit of God, the evidence of the divine blessing accompanying the ministry, must be an object of solicitude; for to this they must look to repair the wastes of death, and preserve their existence. No minister, therefore, can long retain his standing without useful-

ness. The tendency of the churches has, of late years, been to look, not merely for continuance, but for increase; and happily this has, in numerous instances, been enjoyed. They have doubled, trebled, or quadrupled, according to the character of the minister, the extent of the surrounding population, or the number of evangelical ministers in the neighbourhood. Where the church, as distinguished from the congregation, has declined, ministers usually remove; for they are not now as stationary as in former times. This has often been deplored; but though it may sometimes be an evil, it is, on the whole, far better than permanent barrenness, to say nothing of the instances in which, by these changes, "he who has been faithful in a few things, is made ruler over more."

The preaching of the Gospel among Dissenters, has latterly worn a more lively and popular character; for the ministers very seldom read their sermons. But while some fear that the solid divinity of former days is now becoming rare; others think that an excessive attention is paid to artificial method, to brilliancy of thought, and elegance of style. It is not often, however, that these are found in excess, except among young preachers, who usually drop their redundancies as they advance in years; while the great fault of young and old is want of devotional fervour, deep communion with God in the pulpit, and anxious watchfulness for the accompanying influence of the Spirit of Grace.

Some publications, by recent conformists, have charged the Dissenters with making the lives of their ministers wretched by tyrannical dictation, or cruel

neglect. But no discerning, spiritual mind, could avoid seeing, that if the authors of those works endured all they described, it was far less than was deserved by men who had obtruded themselves into an office for which they were not fitted. The ebullition of passion which they condemned, was created by their own unhallowed fires, by which they were thrown off as scum; and when, for the sake of ease, or honour, or emolument, they conformed to a worldly system, and published their apology in the shape of censures on their former connexions, they did but go in their own spirit, to their own place. An apostle who had reason to blame the churches, still found it his honour and his bliss "to live and die with them."

That the principles of the Nonconformist and Puritan fathers are highly valued by the present generation, may be inferred from the encouragement given to republish their works. Those of Charnock, Owen, Baxter, Watts, Doddridge, and Edwards, were so voluminous, that nothing but an extensive circulation could repay the cost. But of these expensive undertakings, the supply gave proof of the demand; for new editions of the whole works, and of the most evangelical and devotional treatises of these great men, have characterized the era of which we write. This is the more remarkable, as those who cater for the public taste, complain that books do not sell; few even of the more popular productions coming to a second edition; and many standard works entailing on their authors, or publishers, a heavy loss.

But a modern improvement, the formation of congregational libraries attached to dissenting societies,

has contributed powerfully to diffuse a knowledge of our great divines among those who could not, or would not, have purchased the voluminous works. While the Sunday schools have created a generation of readers, school libraries have fed and increased the taste produced. Religious books for the young have been immensely multiplied; and some of them are so excellent, as to justify the highest expectations of a happy influence on the rising race.

The increase of their literature has extended the influence of Dissenters beyond their own frontiers. For the works of their most esteemed writers are found in the libraries of religious churchmen, whether of the clergy or laity. This is often manifest and avowed, in the writings of the clergy, and of those few lay members of the Establishment who publish on religious subjects; but those who scrupulously avoid mentioning any other than episcopal writers, are not the less furnished with the works which they decline to quote. The reading of Dissenters themselves, is very much limited to religious books; for, being neither men of leisure nor of wealth, few of them go beyond their favourite hallowed circle. The frequency of preaching among them, and of devotional meetings, leaves them little opportunity, or desire, for a more extensive range. But the concentration of their powers to one object, makes them such divines as require considerable reading and study in their ministers, in order to keep alive the interest of public worship, by being in advance of their flocks.

No candid Christian, who is acquainted with the works of the Puritans, Nonconformists, and early Dis-

senters, will deny, whatever may be his communion, that a taste for such divinity is a sign of a healthy state of religion. For these treatises are no appeals to blind passion, but are addressed to an enlightened judgment; they are not mere party productions, but commend the great vital principles of our common Christianity; nor do they idolize a barren orthodoxy, but lay a due stress upon spirituality of mind and purity of life.

While the fickleness that turns about with every wind of doctrine, is denounced by inspiration, as the mark of children in religion; the firmness that adheres steadily to the truth we have received, is inculcated as the evidence of having grown up to manhood. Judging by this criterion, we must conclude favourably of the state of religion among the great bulk of Dissenters in the present day. No age has been more fruitful in novelties; but these have neither arisen in the original dissenting bodies, nor found among them much countenance, or many proselytes. The doctrines of the sinfulness of Christ's humanity; of the speedy appearance and personal reign of the Redeemer on earth; and of the revival of miraculous powers, though most manifestly unscriptural, absurd and pernicious, have obtained many disciples; yet not from the ranks of the Dissenters, but from among the members and ministers of the Established Churches of Scotland and England. Joanna Southcott found admirers, and apostles in the same quarter, and among the Methodists; but the Independents and Baptists have not been led away by these vagaries. On the contrary, they have furnished the sermons and books, which

interposed a barrier against the enemy that came in as a flood ; and have preserved their flocks uninjured, amidst the evil times. The superior theological education of the ministers, has communicated so much solid scriptural knowledge to their congregations, that these have shown little or no tendency to the wild heresies and practices into which others have fallen.

It is, indeed, remarkable, that the churches which are independent of each other's control, owning no authoritative human creed, have maintained the greatest practical unity of faith, unchanged through successive generations, amidst the prevalence of fanaticism and error. The works of Owen and other founders of their churches are as much valued as ever they were ; and any one of their ministers might preach in all their congregations, from the extreme north to the Land's End, and across the whole kingdom, without the smallest apprehension that a diversity of sentiment, or spirit, would render his ministry unwelcome.

That this uniform steadiness is not the effect of indifference to truth, is proved by the activity of the body in propagating the Gospel, and by the defences which they have published, whenever any important doctrine is attacked. It can, therefore, be ascribed to no other cause than a solid acquaintance with the scriptural evidences of the sentiments they hold, and a practical experience of their power to give solid peace, personal holiness, public usefulness, and cheerful hope of heaven. For the eagerness with which others have caught at every novelty, and the levity with which they have been " carried about by diverse and strange doctrines," betray the fatal secret that they had not

found in their former sentiments and practice anything to set the heart at rest. In fact, the vendors of strange novelties pay a compliment to the evangelical Dissenters, by turning from them in despair, and seeking proselytes among those who are less acquainted with the divine word, and less satisfied with the sentiments they profess to hold. The near approach to Popery which many Protestants in high places are making, proclaims, as with an articulate voice from heaven, that "the way of peace, through believing the testimony of the Gospel, they have not known;" and, therefore, they are hunting after the *terra incognita* of a fancied apostolical succession, to give saving efficacy to sacramental rites. But they who have received justification by faith, find that doctrine as effective to shake the throne of antichrist, as it was in the days of Luther.

The unshaken adherence of Dissenters to "the faith once delivered to the saints," must, therefore, be regarded as nothing less than a proof of the presence of the spirit of truth in their churches; and that to them may be said, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things, clearly discerning that no lie is of the truth." Many of these churches have been "the pillar and ground of the truth," through successive generations.

A high regard for the inspired writings is, indeed, one of the most decisive proofs of the religious prosperity of any communion. To that undivided deference for these infallible records, and that care to multiply copies of them, which formed the chief features of primitive Christianity, we owe the advantages we now derive from this treasure; while the introduction of

other authorities, and the oblivious neglect of Scripture, were at once the effects and the cause of that decay of true piety which rendered the Reformation necessary. This auspicious event was marked and accredited by an unparalleled diligence in the study of the inspired word, and by the faithful improvement of the newly-discovered engine of the press, to multiply editions of the Scriptures in their original tongues, and translations into the modern languages, to a far greater extent than is commonly known. The indirect consequence of this improvement should not be forgotten, amidst the splendour of the direct benefit; for the Catholic Church was compelled, in its own defence, to labour in the same vocation, as many splendid works can testify; and thus the downward tendency of that communion was arrested, if not reversed. Bad as Popery may now be thought, who can tell what it would have been, if the free circulation of the Scriptures among Protestants had not rendered it necessary for all parties to profess a deference for the inspired book?

In the Establishment of this country, no greater proof can be given of an improved state of religion, than the publication and wide diffusion of the "Commentary on the Scriptures, by the Rev. Thos. Scott, Rector of Aston Sandford, Bucks." If, among the Dissenters, few new works of this kind can be adduced, the cause was honourable; they were already well furnished in this department. The exposition of Mathew Henry almost forbids the hope of a successful rival. The editions of this most practical and useful work have so extended its benefits, as to prove that

there has been an increase, rather than a decay, of that regard for the divine word which characterized the class to which the author belonged. Numerous, however, have been the commentaries, either on the whole Bible or on separate books, which attest the regard of Dissenters for the revelation of the divine will. Among the Methodists, the Commentary of Dr. Adam Clarke has appeared; and if it has not been so generally adopted by them as others may suppose, this should create neither surprise nor regret; for it contains a greater display of learning than suits the average attainments of the body; while it has attempted to sustain the cause of Arminianism by copious plagiarisms from Taylor of Norwich, whose heterodoxy was far below the standard of Methodist doctrine.

The knowledge of the Scriptures has been eminently promoted among various bodies of Dissenters, by the Bible classes which the ministers have formed. These have created, in the rising generation, a just deference for divine authority, a minute and accurate attention to the inspired language, and a habit of examining the real sentiments conveyed by the sacred penmen. Persons thus instructed in their early years, after having learned the Assembly's Catechism, with Scripture proofs, are prepared to value and improve those expositions of the Scriptures which are becoming very general in dissenting pulpits. Dissenters being free from the injurious tendency of the Church Catechism, and having no Liturgy to rival the Bible, are left under the undivided influence of the infallible volume. Appending a large array of Scripture refe-

rences to their catechisms, gives life and efficacy to the charge—"To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to their word, it is because there is no light in them."

If the published sermons of the day may be justly appealed to, as evidence of the state of religion, we may mention those of Samuel Lavington, of Biddeford. For though they are specimens of the preaching of a former period, the reception they obtained are a proof of the religious taste of that in which they were published. They furnish a beautiful model of evangelical preaching. The great truths essential to salvation are here exhibited with touching simplicity and holy fidelity, in combination with genuine Christian experience and practical exhortations, which wake all the graces of the believer into vigorous action. These sermons, in obtaining the welcome which they so richly deserved, proved that the taste for simplicity, spirituality, and energy, almost sublime, which Lavington displayed, was still cherished by a subsequent age, that was surprised and delighted to discover excellences which had been almost unknown, because they had modestly hidden themselves in the retirement of a little quiet country town.

The sermons and other devotional works of Mr. Jay, of Bath, have, during the last thirty years, maintained a circulation which bears a similar testimony to the public taste. This should, however, in justice, be extended to many in the Establishment, among whom this preacher is popular. In his volumes, there is no catering to a spurious religious taste; no attempt to make a favourite creed a substitute for holy tempers

and conduct; no sacrifice of our common Christianity to the pride of sect; but the Scriptures are soberly interpreted, and applied with fearless fidelity to every legitimate purpose of Christian experience and practice.

If single sermons are, in general, too ephemeral to demand the notice of history, those of Mr. Robert Hall are splendid exceptions. To some of them may be assigned the importance of volumes; and every competent judge will admit that they are adapted to promote the interests, not of a party, but of the whole church of Christ. As the style of this writer was adapted to the higher order of readers, the extent of his popularity proved that there was a large class who could duly appreciate evangelical sentiments and sublime thoughts in elegant language.

The perspicacious reader will, however, perceive, that, if the dissenting preachers of this age rose far above the inanity that prevailed in the reigns of the first princes of the House of Hanover, there was a considerable falling off from the richness of doctrine and evangelical simplicity of the founders of Dissent. The tone of Calvinism has been lowered; for the dread of Antinomianism drives the most distinguished preachers and writers, if not too far towards the opposite extreme, at least, into a caution and reserve that may lead others into that extreme. Dr. Williams' sermon on Predestination to Life, acquired a notoriety that may be supposed to interpose a check to the serious evil; but his sentiments on the origin of evil attracted most attention, and led the public mind away from the title and theme of the discourse.

The periodicals of a religious community, like the newspapers of a nation, show the spirit of the times less artificially, and, therefore, more sincerely, than its histories, or any other productions of the press. During a great part of the last thirty years, the Evangelical Magazine was the only public organ of the Independents; for though this work originated in a union of evangelical ministers of various communions, including some in the Establishment; of late years, few but Independents have contributed to its pages. To the spirit of this magazine we may confidently appeal, in proof of the supreme regard of the Dissenters for personal religion, on the great principles of the Reformers. There is no work in existence in which catholic Christianity is maintained so free from the bias of a party, and every unhallowed admixture. Politics, which have forced themselves into works of amusement and taste, have been excluded from this magazine. Pure benevolence presides over the work; for its writers receive no compensation but the pleasure of rendering its extensive sale and large profits subservient to the relief of many widows of ministers, and to some kindred objects of charity.

The Congregational Magazine, a more recent work, avowedly designed to advocate the principles of Independents, and aiming at a higher literary character, has a less extensive circulation; but the spirit of its denomination may be known, from its pages, to be decidedly evangelical, and devoted to the best interests of mankind. If the Baptist Magazine adds, to an equal regard for orthodoxy and piety, a marked zeal for adult baptism, by immersion, it should be remem-

bered, that this is the only organ by which that body of Christians can defend and diffuse the sentiments and practice which they deem necessary to a complete conformity with the will of Christ. The Methodist Magazine is a fair exhibition of the religious state of a body which arose out of the zealous labours of Mr. Wesley; and if the abandonment of its old name, the Arminian Magazine, be significant, we may presume that it is what Calvinists would call more orthodox than the original work. Its literary character has certainly improved since it ceased to be under the control of the men who were educated at Oxford; and no impartial Christian can read it without gratitude to God, that such a mass of important truth obtains a circulation so extensive. The Calvinistic Methodists, being less numerous, have either allied themselves with the Evangelical, or supported the Gospel Magazine, to which has now succeeded the Evangelical Register, which leans towards a higher shade of Calvinism, and the adoption of the forms of the Established worship. But from all these works, an impartial inquirer will learn, that the various bodies which form the aggregate mass of Dissenters are essentially a religious people, devoted to the interests of eternity, elevated above the politics of the day, and every thing that does not directly promote the salvation of men. The same sentence cannot, with truth, be pronounced concerning the Monthly Repository, the organ of those who call themselves Presbyterians, or Unitarians, and are called by others, Socinians. To say nothing of the incessant advocacy of a Racovian theology, often bordering on Deism, its pages contain little that can make

any pretence to a devotional character, or a benevolent solicitude to extend the blessings of Christianity through the world. A host of minor miscellanies might be mentioned among the productions of Dissenters which attest their piety and their zeal.

If it be observed, as naturally it may, that the literary mediocrity of most of these publications, says little for the learning or genius of Dissenters; though this is not the object to be proved in a chapter on the state of religion, it may be replied, that the Son of God, when on earth, never visited Athens, to eclipse its philosophers, or Rome, to compete with her orators; but showed the superiority of his character, by confining himself to the paramount interests of eternity, which will retain their worth "when tongues shall cease, and knowledge shall vanish away."

Among the proofs of advancement in genuine piety, it may be proper to mention an increased aversion to war. The honour of giving prominence to the pacific spirit of Christianity, and exposing to just abhorrence the warlike mania that has been the opprobrium of our country, and of the Christian name, belongs to but one class of Dissenters, the Friends, or Quakers. The other denominations too long joined the world, in regarding this as merely one among the singularities of a singular people. But between the years 1820 and 1830, several publications, by Dissenters of other classes, contended for the absolute unlawfulness of war, as Dr. Williams, of Rotherham, had done, many years before. Other dissenting writers, who hesitated to go all these lengths, believing, that when the apostle declared the magistrate was entrusted by God with

the sword, which he was not to bear in vain, the possibility of a lawful war was implied; yet wisely decided, that as almost every war that breaks out is rash and unnecessary, it is a duty to join those who attempt to extinguish a spirit and practice most abhorrent from the genius of a religion of meekness, mercy, forbearance, and love. The Society for the Promotion of Universal Peace was not, therefore, composed solely of Quakers; and though its annual assemblies, in London, were held in the Friends' Meeting House, the speakers were of various dissenting bodies, who were joined also by military and naval men of the Established Church. One of the tracts, by which this Society sought to enlighten the public mind on a Christian duty which had been most awfully neglected and violated, was an extract from Dr. Bogue's volume of Sermons on the Millenium. No discerning Christian could read these publications, and hear the speeches by other classes of Dissenters, without rejoicing that they had, at length, taken an important step, by learning from those who had long been in advance in one point of Christian morals. For the public agitation of the question is eminently calculated to improve the private character of individuals, and to banish all passion and revenge, by force of the meekness and gentleness of Christ. Duelling, that opprobrium of our country, and every species of vindictiveness, fall under the censure of the Peace Society.

What are called revivals of religion, are peculiar to Dissenters; for though religion has revived in the Establishment, by a great increase of evangelical

preaching, which God will never leave destitute of a blessing, those more marked scenes to which the term revival is applied, are scarcely to be expected where all things are prescribed by fixed forms, and where departure from the ordinary course is treated as a crime. America seems to be the native soil for these scenes of modern growth; and the first that attracted attention in this country was that which occurred under the ministry of President Edwards, of Northampton, in New England, of which the "Narrative" was recommended to the notice of the British public, and especially of Dissenters, by Drs. Watts, and Guyse. The sound philosophical mind of the author of the Treatise on the Freedom of the Will, furnished a guarantee against fanaticism in this affair; and the publication of the sermons which produced the revival, proved, not only that the most legitimate means were employed, but that the people who could understand and relish such discourses, must have been the last to be carried away by mere rant, or emotions for which they could give no good reason. The Treatise on Religious Affections, which Edwards published, at this time, to guard the church against being deceived by unhallowed fire, submits experimental religion to an ordeal more severe than was ever instituted by the most acute foe to fanaticism. The minister who could write, and the people who could welcome, such a book, amidst high religious excitement, must be able, and as willing, to distinguish between the kindlings of animal passion, and the genuine influence of evangelical truth brought home to the heart by the Holy Spirit.

During the latter part of the thirty years of this

history, these scenes of religious excitement were not only renewed in the Western world, but were also objects of intense interest in our own country. One of the earliest notices of such an event was given in a letter from a minister at Trelech, in Wales; but many other publications called the attention of Dissenters to this theme.

The intercourse of British Nonconformists with the churches which their fathers founded beyond the Atlantic, having been rendered more close and serious, kept alive attention to those interesting occurrences, revivals, which may be called the spring tides of religion. If a desire to witness similar scenes in our own country may indicate a consciousness of need, it proves also a state of religion not very far from such prosperity; for where they are most needed, they are either undesired, unnoticed, or despised. That this was not the case with the Dissenters is proved by "Notes of the Worcester Conference, which was held in that city in 1828, to consider the means by which religion might be revived among us." At the Poultry Chapel, in London, a similar conference was held in the beginning of 1829, by the Ministers of the Congregational Board, for consideration of the same subject, and prayer to obtain the effusion of the Spirit on the churches. Several most valuable publications on this subject waked up the attention of the churches, and showed the deep interest which the ministers took in it. The republication of many American works on revivals gave additional impulse to the public mind. "An Address to those who are engaged in preparatory studies for the work of the Ministry, on the subject

of Revivals of Religion," was published in the Evangelical Magazine, to interest the rising ministry in this most desirable object. Days of fasting and prayer were held by the Congregational ministers in London. For the Congregational Board having been called to consider this subject, by a communication from Birmingham, at the close of the year 1828, passed a series of resolutions expressive of gratitude to God for what he had wrought in America, and of a desire to enjoy similar blessings in our own land. The Board assembled, the next month, for special prayer, and agreed to call the attention of the churches to this object, on the first Sabbath of the year; and to employ the first leisure day, which was what is called Good Friday, in public united devotions, to implore the effusion of the Holy Spirit. A fraternal letter was agreed to be sent to the American Churches, on the revival of religion among them; and another, on the same subject, was ordered to be addressed to the Congregational churches of England.

On many of these special seasons of prayer, the most decisive evidences were given of the spirit of devotion, and of the gracious presence of Him who has said, that "none shall seek his face in vain."

About the same time that the attention of the churches was directed to the revival of religion, and their prayers were poured out to obtain the blessing, the subject of temperance was brought before them. In America, the use, or rather, the abuse, of ardent spirits, having spread fearful desolation among even professors of religion, the formation of temperance societies to banish the practice of taking spirits as an

ordinary beverage, was crowned with unexpected success. The Dissenters of Scotland and England took up the question with considerable zeal, and many of their ministers signed a pledge of total abstinence from the deadly poison. In London, they were induced to take this step, from seeing the fearful desolation produced among the lower classes, by a practice which filled the city with what were called gin palaces, where the utmost splendour was displayed, at the expense of the unhappy victims, who resorted in crowds to these temples of drunkenness. To be the more fully authorised to bear their testimony against the wide-wasting mischief, many ministers and private Christians publicly abjured the use of spirits themselves, and engaged to discountenance the practice and causes of drunkenness. Much good was done by the public meetings held to promote the influence of the Temperance Society; and those who joined it were grateful to the kind providence that directed their attention to a measure which equally promoted their piety and their health; but the same extensive and powerful effects that America has witnessed, have not yet been seen in England.

This has led to the formation of a new society, for total abstinence from wine and beer, and every drink that can intoxicate. For it was observed, that if in London, Scotland, and Ireland, ardent spirits are the general poison; in the greater part of our own country, intoxication is chiefly produced among the poor by the excessive drinking of beer, and among the richer classes by wine. It is, however, gratifying to record, that, though drunkenness was formerly deemed the

appropriate vice of gentlemen, the higher ranks now regard it as a disgrace. The zeal of the younger Temperance Society has attempted to render what is foolishly called teetotalism, a test of religion, and a term of admission to communion among Christians, which has naturally produced a reaction in the minds of those who joined the original society for abolishing the ordinary use of ardent spirits, but resisted the imposition of a test which Christ has not enjoined.

The effect of the Temperance Societies was favourable to religion. A solicitude to do every thing that might discountenance vice and promote the welfare of others, led many temperate men to join the new societies; and they unanimously declare that they and their families have been benefited by the banishment of an article, which ought never to have appeared on their tables. By this sacrifice to public good, which has proved a private blessing, they have felt themselves authorised to war against an evil that was spreading around the most appalling ruin. The farther advance to total abstinence from every drink but water, has been the natural consequence of discovering that health has been promoted by the former step, and of a wish to try whether a second and final step may not be equally safe, and still more widely beneficial. The original society was eminently promoted by a grand array of medical testimonies, that spirits were not only not useful, but positively injurious; and nothing seems wanting to secure the triumphs of total abstinence from all stimulating drinks, but a similar declaration from those who are best acquainted with the laws of health. Meanwhile, many are trying

the experiment for themselves; and a generation of water drinkers is rising, who, never having been accustomed to the use of stimulants, may furnish convincing proofs, that the most entire abstinence is as conducive to the health of the body as to that of the soul.

The Temperance Society having operated on sailors, a class notoriously given to the abuse of ardent spirits, and induced many commanders of ships to go to sea without the usual supply of the poison, shipwrecks have been prevented, and insurances effected at a lower rate. This leads us to notice another favourable indication of advancing piety—increased attention to the religious wants of sailors. By Dissenters this subject was first pressed upon the minds of Christians; and societies being formed, ships were fitted up for chapels, where the Gospel was preached to seafaring men. Tracts and magazines were printed for their instruction, and asylums were opened for their neglected children and orphans. These efforts were not confined to our own ports, but attempts have been made by persons who have gone out for that purpose, to furnish the means of religious instruction to sailors in every quarter of the globe. As a natural appendage to this benevolent movement, may be mentioned, the opening of more than one asylum, called penitentiaries, for prostitutes, in which the wretched women who create a large part of the sins and miseries of sailors, are not merely furnished with a refuge in the hour of repentance, but are also wisely and diligently instructed in the doctrines of the Gospel. These efforts have brought out to view the melancholy fact, that the poorer part of our population has been suffered to grow up

in ignorance of the Christian religion, scarcely inferior to that which reigns among the most distant heathens.

Another proof of the prevalence of active self-denying piety among Dissenters is furnished by the Christian Instruction Society. This institution labours to bring religious knowledge into the homes of those who would not seek it in places of worship, and sends visitors, with religious tracts, into the most neglected districts, where rooms are hired for prayer meetings and preaching, by which many have been induced to attend public worship, and to send their children to Sabbath schools. To these and other methods of diffusing Christian knowledge, of which history cannot record the details, has been added, the bold measure of preaching in the open air. This practice, which commenced with the Lord himself, and was followed by his apostles, which was commonly practised by the itinerant friars of the Church of Rome, and adopted, at the Reformation, by some of its most distinguished promoters ; was revived by Whitfield ; largely practised by Wesley ; and never entirely abandoned by the Methodists of the Calvinistic and Arminian creeds. But it has been the honour of the Christian Instruction Society to give currency to it among the Independents, whose ministers have, for some years, laboured in this truly apostolic way. To obviate the inconvenience which sometimes arises from the weather, tents have been provided, and put up in open spaces near to the most frequented haunts of Sabbath breakers, who have thus been attracted from scenes of profaneness and dissipation, to listen to the voice of prayer, and the sound of salvation. To the honour of our country,

and the encouragement of the zealous, it should be recorded, that the brutal treatment often given to Whitfield, Wesley, and their followers, when preaching in the open air, is now exchanged for orderly behaviour, and respectful attention, almost without exception; nor is it less creditable to the government, that the new police, which forms a marked feature of the times, is so far from opposing any hindrance to these bold aggressive efforts, that its agents prove the most efficient protectors of all who combine prudence with their zeal. Some exceptions to this last fact have, however, lately occurred.

These varied and energetic movements were still not enough to meet the exigencies of the case, or the benevolent solicitude of Christians. A new society, therefore, was introduced by a Dissenter into London, after he had tried its efficacy in Scotland, Ireland, and America. The City Mission was its title; and its aim was to employ agents whose whole time should be devoted to visiting every house, in order to instruct the inhabitants, and warn them to fly from the wrath to come. For this purpose, it was necessary to provide funds to support numerous agents; while the Christian Instruction Society employed gratuitous visitors, who could give, only their leisure hours, chiefly in the afternoon of the Lord's day. The towns and cities in which the new society was formed, were divided into sections, with a view to the visitation of every family. In a short time, funds were obtained by Mr. Naismith, the father of this scheme, for the support of upwards of sixty agents and superintendents; and as his object was catholic, and did not include

preaching, he was cheered by the zealous co-operation, not only of Dissenters, but of some devoted members and ministers of the Established Church. Full of benevolent schemes, after rendering the City Mission suddenly effective, beyond all expectation, he withdrew to take charge of other measures for the accomplishment of the same great object. Thus a new society for the distribution of tracts among the rich, supplies an important desideratum. That which is called, by emphasis, the Religious Tract Society, aimed chiefly at the instruction of the poor and the middle classes, and left the distribution to the zeal of the purchasers. But the new society procures tracts, on a connected series of subjects, in a style suited to the better educated, who are supplied, at regular intervals, with what is more attractive in appearance, as well as more agreeable in style and composition.

A female mission, also, is devoted to the recovery of the thousands of unhappy women who, having been the victims of seduction themselves, become the seducers of our youth. To this should be added, a Young Men's Society, formed to preserve this important class from pernicious associations; to employ their evenings in profitable and instructive exercises; and to provide for them lodgings where their morals may be guarded from injury.

The Home Missionary Society, another offspring of this last period of Dissent, has, by its very name, given vast offence to those who think it treats as heathen, a nation which they would denominate Christian, without being able to prove that it is a nation of Christians. This benevolent institution is but a kind

of national effort to accomplish what minor societies and county associations had long attempted in different districts—the sending of the Gospel into the dark parts of our land. That such realms of night should be found, without requiring any careful research, is, indeed, our disgrace. But when the people are left as sheep without a shepherd, or with such as are worse than none, it is a sacred duty to seek their rescue from the devouring lion. The Home Missionary Society, which makes the whole kingdom its charge, took the precedency in many of those efforts which have just been mentioned. The agents whom it employs, are either ministers, who offer themselves to this department of labour, or good men who have been lay preachers in a more limited locality. They are frequently put under the direction of the associated dissenting churches, and are located in particular counties, at a distance from the preaching of the Gospel in the Establishment, or among Dissenters. The Home Missionary has various preaching stations, which occupy almost every evening in the week ; and myriads owe to these laborious men all their knowledge of the Gospel of Christ. Congregations have thus been raised, which have invited the Home Missionaries to become their settled pastors. This is a consummation to be desired, provided the objects of their choice be equal to the arduous task of constantly preaching to the same people; for it should not be forgotten, that there is danger of increasing an incompetent ministry.

Though the Home Missionary Society and its agents are Dissenters, its principles and spirit are catholic; and, while some of the high church party are

indignant at its very name, others in the Establishment acknowledge the necessity for such an institution, and give substantial proofs that they would rather see the kingdom evangelized by these means, than left a prey to heathenish ignorance and vice. This society furnishes the best answer to those who argue against foreign missions, by saying we have heathens enough at home; for it would, indeed, be a disgrace to our country, if we were to expend large sums for the conversion of those who are at the ends of the earth, and do nothing for those who are perishing at our own doors.

The Colonial Missionary Society is the offspring of the Congregational Union. For this latter institution was intended to promote the formation of Congregational churches in our colonies abroad, as well as in our villages at home. But it was found most desirable to form a distinct society for the foreign operations, and this was effected in May, 1836. Under the patronage of the Colonial Mission, ministers have gone to New South Wales, Van Dieman's Land, and Canada, to form, or to save from extinction, Congregational churches. Where our countrymen would have been left to sink into heathenism, they now enjoy the ordinances of the Gospel, and the pastoral care of men imbued with the principles and spirit of the pilgrim fathers, who founded, in the United States of America, those churches which now exhibit so noble a specimen of Christianity, and, in their turn, are spreading the Gospel to the ends of the earth. This is the first instance in which the English Independents have attempted to propagate their own form of religion in foreign stations; for, largely as they have shared in

the work of missions, they, and the Calvinistic Methodists alone, have hitherto merged their own peculiarities in societies of a catholic character, to diffuse the common faith of Christians.

The London Itinerant Society for the Preaching of the Gospel in the Suburban Villages, and other kindred institutions, have not been mentioned, because they have been the offspring of a religious zeal which existed prior to the commencement of the period of which this volume treats. But the Irish Evangelical Society claims our notice, as a recent benevolent effort for the sister isle, whose spiritual state has been improved by the labours of many excellent men, who have been sent forth to preach the Gospel in the Irish, as well as the English tongue.

An enumeration that may be thought tedious, has yet left much untold. For many local associations, for the same pious and benevolent objects, have either escaped the writer's notice, or have been deemed too minute for the page of history. Every visit to a locality before unknown, discloses new proofs of an active zeal, and of laborious efforts for the eternal welfare of men; and not unfrequently, a dissenting congregation in a village, puts to shame a metropolitan church.

As it must strike every attentive observer, that societies for all kinds of benevolent objects cannot be formed and maintained without immense funds, it may naturally be asked, how are they obtained? This directs our attention to another branch of personal religion, liberality in the use of property. The Establishment, in addition to its immense permanent revenues, has frequently received large grants from the public

purse; while Dissenters, who are not generally rich, are left to their own resources. The Quakers, and the Unitarians, indeed, are not unfrequently persons of considerable property; but these are not the classes which furnish the funds for the most expensive efforts of Dissenters. The latter body, though composed of the most wealthy dissenting families, and occupying places that have been endowed by men of an opposite creed, is not engaged in such missions as absorb the largest funds; nor do they take any share in several other schemes of expensive benevolence. The support of their own congregations, and the publication of works designed to diffuse their distinguishing creed, are almost the only objects of a religious nature to which they contribute. The wealth of the Society of Friends is, perhaps, not always equal to its reputation; and it has been taxed, by their own faithful testimony against being called to support a state priesthood, for which they have suffered, by the spoiling of their goods, to the amount of ten or fourteen thousand pounds annually. Far from being impoverished by this stern adherence to principle, they are still renowned for wealth. Such power has wisdom, and industry, and sobriety, and abstinence from the expensive follies of the world, to repair, and repay any damages that may be inflicted by bigotry on Nonconformity.

But, after all, it is a disgrace to a religious people to be rich. As long as our Lord's words sound in our ears, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, for hardly shall they that have riches enter the kingdom of heaven;" it must be the study of the conscientious Christian to keep down his riches, as he would

his foes. This is not overlooked by the more discerning and pious among the Society of Friends, who lament over the tendency of others to accumulate riches. The vast fortunes which some of them have amassed, are the more disgraceful, because they profess peculiar spirituality and detachment from the world, and because they are surrounded with those who are furnishing, from far inferior resources, the means of diffusing Christianity, without regard to sect or party, through the world. If the Friends cannot join with others, why not go to work by themselves? To wait for a special call to do that which is, at all times, a duty, is the worst species of fanaticism, not to say Antinomianism. With pleasure we record, however, that a people whom so many considerations induce us to esteem, has not been without faithful men who have sounded the note of warning and reproof for the undue accumulation of wealth, and the selfish neglect of benevolent duties. This is said to have been adverted to by one of their number, at their yearly meeting in London, in 1837.

Not, however, that it would be just to leave the reader to think, that the Friends are doing nothing for those benevolent objects in which they are not engaged as a body. As they have always been ready to give to hospitals, and charitable subscriptions for the temporal necessities of men; so they have, of late years, shown some sympathy for their eternal interests. Schools for the children of their own poor they liberally provide; and since the British and Foreign School has presented them with an object free from sectarian bias, they have proved themselves the friends

of education for the children of others. The Bible Society has, on the same account, received their liberal support; and even missions have been aided by them, not directly, because they disapprove of what they term a hireling ministry, but by contributions to the schools formed at the various mission stations, which relieves the funds that must otherwise have been expended on education, and may now be devoted to the preaching of Christ among the heathen. One of the Society of Friends, Daniel Wheeler, has made a sort of missionary visit to the islands of the Pacific. But, with every allowance that justice or candour may make, it still remains true, that the richest, though not the largest body of Dissenters, is doing the least, compared with its means, for the extension of the knowledge of Christ at home and abroad.

The funds, then, that support the most numerous and costly efforts of Christian benevolence, are mainly furnished by the least wealthy bodies, the Independents, Baptists, and Methodists. If the last-mentioned communion are scarcely allowed, either by themselves, or others, to be Dissenters; in those exertions, of which we speak, they are eminently so. To support ministers who are not episcopally ordained, to build chapels which are placed under the protection of the Toleration Act, to distribute tracts, and to send missionaries through the world, independently of the Church Missionary Society, or the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, or the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, is the most practical dissent. For these works of mercy, the Methodists subscribe with distinguished liberality; and they are, perhaps, less chargeable, as a

body, with the sin of covetousness, than any other religious communion. It may, indeed, be said, that this arises from their being younger than the other sects, who, at the same age, were entitled to the same praise. But whatever may be the cause, the fact is the province of the historian, who has no right to assume the office of the prophet, by affirming that the Methodists will, at last, fall into the vice of old age.

The Baptists deserve the more credit for the religion that prompts to benevolent sacrifice, because they are neither so numerous, nor so wealthy, as some other denominations; and they have had to overcome the resistance which a tendency to Hyper-calvinism, bordering on Antinomianism, will oppose to schemes of self-denying benevolence. They led the way, and provoked the Independents to jealousy, in the labours of missions. Their station in Bengal will furnish a lasting testimony to the excellence of character that is to be found in this communion. If the amount of their contributions to missions is not equal to that of some other communions, so neither are their means. The Baptist Irish Mission is a proof of their zealous solicitude for a country which has special claims on our benevolence.

One of the most striking proofs of the liberality of Christians was given by the Congregational churches of Wales, who, in 1834, subscribed eighteen thousand pounds towards paying off a debt of thirty thousand on their chapels. The Congregational Board of London, therefore, gave special sanction to an application to this country, by which the churches of the principality were assisted to discharge the remainder of the

debt. When the poverty of Wales is considered, this must be regarded as a very noble proof of liberality and zeal.

To prompt Christians to abound in these graces, a dissenting physician offered a prize, of a hundred guineas, for the best essay against Covetousness, which was awarded by the adjudicators, one of whom was a clergyman, and another a dissenting minister, to the pastor of a Congregational church. The effect of this essay, which was published under the title of Mammon, was, as might be expected, a considerable increase of liberal offerings to the treasury of religion.

If it should be objected, that these numerous and vigorous schemes are no decisive proofs of the influence of pure religion among Dissenters, because the ambition of party may have been the predominating motive; it may be replied, that the fields of labour were, in many, perhaps in most instances, chosen where the necessities of men were the greatest, and where the hopes of sectarian advantage were the least. But the most decisive evidence of purity of motive is furnished by the catholic character of those benevolent schemes which have been projected and supported by the zeal of Dissenters. It is their usual practice to confine their attention to the great essentials of religion, in which all but Socinians and Catholics are agreed. In urging attendance on public worship, dissenting missionaries encourage those who are so disposed, to attend on an evangelical ministry in the Establishment, and advise against listening to error wherever it may be preached. In fact, the bigots of either party are not the most zealous labourers in this

field, which is almost exclusively occupied by those who, while they adhere to the communions which their judgments most approve, are deeply penetrated with the paramount importance of the sentiments and practices in which true Christians of various denominations cordially agree. The most exclusive efforts to keep men to one communion are made by the Establishment. If, therefore, a catholic spirit is a proof of pure religion, the prevalence of this more expansive benevolence among Dissenters, affords some evidence in their favour.

From our Lord's last prayer for his disciples, we learn that Christian unity is essential to a high state of religion. For, as those contentions, which too frequently arise among Christians, spring from evil causes, on one side, at least, if not on both, so the most pernicious effects arise from discord. A religious quarrel is a contradiction in terms. It is, therefore, consoling to reflect, that in this last period of our history, we have had to record no great internal dissension, but many proofs of sacred harmony. The Arian controversy of an earlier era, and the Socinian of a later, shook the Dissenters like a civil war; but ended in that separation which showed how small was the number of the heterodox, and left the main body peaceful and united. The Socinian controversy had, during the last period, been carried on as with a foreign foe, and produced little effect on the interior. The Arminian controversy, that arose on the separation of Whitfield and Wesley, was conducted in a disgraceful spirit; but it was between two classes that were still clinging to the Establishment, from which

they had recently emerged, and the avowed Dissenters took little part in the strife. The continuance of that contest has been chiefly between Calvinists and such Arminians as Wesleyans would pronounce anti-evangelical; while the general spirit of the Calvinists and Wesleyans towards each other, has been pacific, even to a friendly interchange of kind services.

The question of the subject and mode of baptism has, indeed, never ceased to be agitated; but it has not prevented an approximation of the parties, who are, at present, in a more desirable position towards each other, than in any former period. The honour of producing a more catholic spirit, is due to writers in those bodies which had formerly been most exclusive; for Dr. Mason, a Presbyterian, and Mr. Robert Hall, a Baptist, have been the eloquent advocates of catholic communion.

The contest concerning the London Female Penitentiary, was ephemeral and local, and ended in a manner that did honour to the religion of both parties. There was more heat in the publications on Dr. Williams' system, than became either the subject or the combatants; but the dignified bearing of the Doctor himself, spoke highly for his principles; and as there were not many who took part in the dispute, it never affected the temper or the credit of the Dissenters at large.

No Christian will think it a crime to have mingled in the strife that was created by the attacks of infidels; but it may fairly be asked, how far the religious character of Dissenters has been affected by the modern controversy on the voluntary principle. As this was,

in a certain sense, a question of money, it exhibited, at its commencement, the bitter fruit which "the root of all evil" usually bears. The ministers of the Establishment, alarmed for their revenues, charged the Dissenters with adopting a principle, to save their money. Refusal to pay church-rates, led to parish contests, and to the seizure of goods, which inflamed the passions of the contending parties. But it too often escaped observation, that this new mode of warfare had many advantages over the ancient attacks of Nonconformity upon the Establishment. For, instead of finding fault with the religion of others, always an ungracious and provoking thing, Dissenters began to say, "We presume not to dictate to you, and merely ask that you should not exact upon us. If you prefer Episcopacy and a Liturgy, we have no right, and no wish, to control you; but you should pay for these things yourselves, and leave us to support, only that religion which we prefer." The end of this controversy will be peace, because "the work of righteousness is Peace."

But if the age of which we write cannot justly be charged with unholy strife, many are the proofs of a spirit of union and harmony highly creditable to the different bodies of Dissenters. When the Missionary Society was formed, so various were its component parties, that many sinister forebodings were uttered concerning its permanency. The few evangelical clergymen who assisted at its birth, found scarcely any successors; for the speedy formation of the Church Missionary Society left its elder sister to be practically a dissenting body, though its catholic principle

remained unchanged, and one of its anniversary sermons is still preached, by an Episcopalian, within the established pale. But the Independents, the evangelical Presbyterians, and the Calvinistic Methodists, have worked so harmoniously together, that it would be difficult to know the distinctive communion of its directors, or agents, by any thing that occurs in its councils or operations: nothing could afford a more refreshing proof of the purity of their aims, and their exalted devotion to the one grand, all-absorbing object—the glory of Christ in the conversion of the world to the Christian faith. The predominance of the Independents in this Society, is a proof of their catholicity.

The spirit of union, so indicative of religious prosperity, was displayed, during this last period of the dissenting history, in the accomplishment of an object, which had formerly been attempted in vain. The history of the Congregational Union belongs strictly to the preceding chapter; but its introduction here is demanded by the testimony it affords to the state of religion. A jealousy of their independency has always marked the churches which adopt the system, and has hitherto prevented any general specific union of the whole; though county associations throughout the kingdom have exhibited the same thing on a similar scale. While that jealousy reigns undiminished, the concurrence of the greater part of the churches in the formation of the Union, proves an increasing influence of the attraction of affinity; and while several great public objects have been attempted, nothing has hitherto occurred, but what was calculated to elicit

the exclamation, " Behold how good, and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity !"

But the title of the Congregational Union of England and Wales would not lead a stranger to understand the full extent to which the union of Christians, of this denomination, has been carried. The Congregational Union of Scotland, which had previously existed in vigorous and beneficent operation, was brought into friendly contact with that in England. Delegates from the one body attended at the anniversaries of the others, and fraternal epistles were exchanged. The same course was adopted towards the Congregational Union of Ireland ; and powerful, as well as holy and delightful, were the effects. This, however, was not enough to satisfy the love of union which has latterly prevailed. Fraternal correspondence was carried on between the Congregationalists of England and those of the United States of America ; and as these are in close alliance with the Presbyterians of that country, they also were included in the interchange of epistles which expressed and cherished "the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace." Deputations were sent from the Congregational Association of New England, and the Presbyterian Synod of New York ; and sermons were preached in this country by the American ministers, whose visits eminently contributed to unite Christians, on both sides of the Atlantic. It was, at length, resolved to repay this expression of love ; and Messrs. Reed, of London, and Matheson, of Durham, went, as the representatives of the Congregationalists of England, to attend the anniversaries of the Congregational and Presbyterian

Unions in America. Their reception was all that could have been expected, or wished; and the account they gave, on their return, contributed to draw closer the bonds of unity between Christians and churches, who, though separated by lands and seas, are one in Christ. The journal of the deputation was published, and will furnish to posterity a memorial, like the altar erected on the Jordan, to remind the children that their fathers on both sides of the flood had one religion and one God.

The Baptists followed in the same tract, and deputed Messrs. Cox, of London, and Hoby, of Birmingham, to bear their fraternal salutations to the transatlantic churches of their own communion. But the question of the abolition of slavery in America, the inevitable consequence of the triumph of that cause in Britain, placed these two ministers in a very delicate and difficult position. Mr. George Thompson, an agent of the British Anti-slavery Society, who was then agitating the question of emancipation, on their return to this country, charged the ministers with unfaithfulness to the cause of the negroes, because they confined themselves too much to the object for which they were sent. This theme of terrible interest, threatened to disturb the harmony of the Christian churches in the two countries; for though the States in which the Independents prevail, are free from the curse of slavery, its prevalence in those where Baptists and Presbyterians are numerous, has deeply implicated them in the sin, which many zealous Baptists, in this country, faithfully denounce. Mr. Thompson held, also, a debate with Mr. Breckinridge, an American minister, who at-

tempted, in vain, to defend, or palliate, the charge brought against his country, for persisting in the practice of holding their fellow men as slaves. "The Baptists in America," was the title of the work which the second deputation from this country published, on their return.

The Congregational and Baptist Unions held fraternal intercourse, during the meetings in May, 1838; and a proposal was, soon after, made for a further step to be taken in the autumn of the same year. But this may be considered as the happy fruit of a prior co-operation, in more directly devotional exercises. For, in the year 1834, the members of the Baptist Board, and of the United Secession Presbytery, joined, by invitation, with the Congregational Board, in their special meeting for prayer, at the opening of the year.

It may, however, be deemed, by some, an exception to these acts of fraternization among Christians, that, on a proposal being made in 1834, to admit to a seat in the Congregational Board, certain ministers who act on the principles of Congregational churches, except that they use the Liturgy of the Establishment in their public worship, it was resolved that this was inexpedient. But by a subsequent vote, such ministers were at length admitted. Thus another barrier that separated Christians was thrown down; and an additional proof was given that Dissent is not synonimous with dissension.

The interest that Dissenters took in the great question of the abolition of slavery, which was effected in 1834, proved them the genuine friends of the human race. The martyrdom of Smith, their missionary to

Demerara, had sharpened the edge of their zeal against slavery, as irreconcileably opposed to Christianity, as well as humanity. In this, the Quakers took an honourable interest; and many pious members of the Establishment lent efficient aid. It was the united force of the *religious* public that effected the abolition of slavery. To celebrate this grand act of national justice, unparalleled in the history of the world, Dissenters held a day of devotion, on the 1st of August, 1834, when our slaves were by the law declared free. Thanksgivings were presented to the God of justice and of mercy, for his interposition in behalf of the oppressed; and prayers were offered, that the negroes might, by the Gospel of Christ, "be made free, indeed." Sermons were preached on the occasion, to animate to those efforts which were required to render the emancipation an eternal, as well as a temporal blessing. Bibles were appropriated to the negroes, and additional missionaries were sent to the colonies. This triumph of liberty included the slaves of South Africa, who had attracted little attention, and the aborigines of that land, who had been treacherously robbed of the rights of freedom. Dr. Philip, an Independent minister, who had been appointed to superintend the South African stations of the London Missionary Society, had stood forth as their defender, and at great personal risk and sacrifice, had fought their battles, both with the authorities at the Cape of Good Hope, and with the government at home. His triumph in this cause was rewarded with another opportunity of becoming the benefactor of the oppressed. For when the Caffres had been most unjustly exposed to a cruel war, and

despoiled of their country, which was formed into a new colonial district, Dr. Philip's energetic representations induced the ministry of Britain to rescind the infamous act, and restore to the injured people their native land. In this affair, which places Dr. Philip among the most intrepid friends of man, the liberal spirit of the Dissenters stands out in prominent contrast with the selfish, slavish temper of some other missionaries. But as what was termed the apprenticeship system had been adopted, under pretence of preparing the slaves for freedom, the termination of the apprenticeship of the non-predial, or domestic slaves, in 1838, roused the friends of the Africans to urge the government to extend the same blessing to the predial, or field slaves, whose bondage, which had, in many cases, been aggravated by a mock emancipation, was to continue four years longer. The effort, though powerful, and headed by the ex-chancellor, Lord Brougham, failed ostensibly, but really succeeded; for the government was impelled to such measures as induced the colonial authorities to grant immediate and unlimited emancipation. This measure will greatly facilitate dissenting missions, and reward their benevolent zeal by extending their usefulness.

If, in a review of the religious state of any people, even-handed justice demands the mention of those things which are a deduction from the spirit of piety, what can be more serious than that which is called Antinomianism? This, where real, is the essence of irreligion. That the theology of Calvin, which is charged by its opponents with Antinomian tendencies, prevails among Dissenters, is well known, and is

abundantly proved by those defences of this creed, which have been noticed in the Chapter on Controversies. But the Genevan system prevails, also, among those clergymen who are called evangelical, and who will not be pronounced by any candid observer less pious than the anti-evangelical class in their own church. The modification of the Calvinistic scheme, which is known by the term modern, or moderate Calvinism, has latterly prevailed among Dissenters; and has brought upon them the charge of Arminianism from those who are called Ultra-calvinists. These are, in general, obscure, illiterate men, who have contrived to make themselves the idols of a faction, usually composed of men of doubtful character, thrown off as refuse from the churches which were sound in the faith, and pure in communion.

One exception to the obscurity of these preachers might have been mentioned in the biographical department of this work, if a bad eminence could have entitled any one to a memorial among the excellent of the earth. No one succeeded Wm. Hunt, alias Huntington, in the same style; and the spirit of Antinomianism walked chiefly among the established clergy. The south of Devon was the principal seat of this worst of heresies, of which Dr. Hawker, Vicar of Charles, Plymouth, was the Heresiarch. He poisoned the surrounding region with bad principles, and a vulgar taste; and although he lived and died within the Established Church, he gave birth to many little coteries of dissenting Antinomians. Against this spirit, Mr. Joseph Cottle published a protest, entitled, "Strictures on the Plymouth Antinomians," of whom he

says, "Imputed sanctification is the spring of all their errors." His quotation from the eloquent Robert Hall, deserves a place in the history of this blot upon the religion of Dissenters. "As almost every age of the Church is marked by its appropriate visitation of error; so, little penetration is requisite to perceive that Antinomianism is the epidemic malady of the present; and that it is an evil of gigantic size, and deadly malignity. It includes within a compass which every head can contain, and every tongue can utter, a system which cancels every moral tie, consigns the whole human race to the extremes of presumption or despair, erects religion on the ruins of morality, and imparts to the dregs of stupidity all the powers of the most active poison. The author will ever feel himself honoured by whatever censures he may incur through his determined opposition to such a system." In this declaration of war, the great body of the dissenting ministers concurred; though the communion to which the author himself belonged, was the one most troubled with the foul plague spot; while it has also furnished the most powerful antidotes to the disease. Among these should be recorded, Mr. Burt's vindication of the moral government of God; "Observations on the System of Theology, taught by the Rev. Dr. Hawker."

But in that part of Kent which lies nearest to the metropolis, a beneficed clergyman long sustained an unenviable rivalship with Dr. Hawker, and spread the virus of his heresy, not only in his own denomination, but also among the Dissenters, who are but too susceptible of impressions from such of the clergy as are deemed evangelical. In Leicester, also, the pulpit of

the Establishment dealt forth the most shameless declaration of God's decrees and operations being the source of evil, equally with good; as if it were considered a piece of religious heroism to give the lie direct to the inspired apostle, who said, "Out of the same fountain proceed not sweet waters and bitter." The indulgence which these antinomianized clergy gave to error, occasioned much mischief among Dissenters, for the infected men usually migrated into other communions, where they spread the fatal plague.

While, in London, Antinomianism was driven into the obscurest haunts of Dissent; the prize essay against covetousness was assailed by two clergymen, in a book which bore the counter title of Anti-mammon, written, if not in the true spirit, at least, on the principles of the Antinomian school, that the decrees of God supersede the efforts of his people, and command us to sit still, that, in the language of this party, God may do his own work. The discerning reader will naturally ask, if these men believed their own doctrine, why did they not sit still, and leave God to write Anti-mammon? But to men of this creed, contradictions present no difficulties; as extremes meet, the most furious Antinomians, often prove themselves real Arminians.

The consequence of the Antinomian taint may sometimes be seen among Dissenters, in the prejudice entertained against the invitations of the Gospel, and exhortations to those who are considered as dead in sins. That this is not the result of genuine Calvinism, is well known to those who are familiar with the writings and practice of the great Reformer; but the

error has been grafted on his system by those who have been more eager to espouse certain parts, than studious to understand the whole. But where the heresy of Antinomianism prevailed, the ministry of the Gospel has lost its generous benevolent character, and has been cursed with the barrenness which the perversion of the truth deserves.

But the faults of Dissenters are not all on one side; for even the Ultra-calvinism, which has checked the usefulness of some, has not rarely been the offspring of a tendency to Arminianism in others. The theology of such men as Owen, has been sometimes exchanged for that of Baxter. The abuse of God's decrees has deterred many from putting them to their proper use; and while the universal call of the Gospel has been maintained, the election of grace has not, indeed, been denied, but passed by in silence, as unsafe, if not pernicious. This has grieved the Spirit of God, who revealed that truth; has deprived believers of the edification it was intended to afford; and left men to learn it, not from wise expositors, who would direct to its proper use, but from crude interpreters, whose imperfect knowledge has naturally been accompanied with defective practice. Rhetorical, instead of theological preaching, has seriously injured many dissenting churches of the present day. The idolatry of talent, to which the popularity of a few splendid men has given rise, exalts tropes to the place of texts, prefers oratorical declamation to theological instruction, and the fascinations of imagination to the edification of the soul. This fatal taste throws truth so much into the shade, that painted error may easily

lead away the unwary; for, where the doctrines of the Gospel are not kept prominently before the mind, the sense of their value and importance is so far lost, that opposite opinions excite little horror, and no alarm.

It has been the opinion of some severe censors, if not sagacious observers, that Dissenters have declined in other virtues for which their predecessors were eminent. The ministers have been charged with neglect of pastoral inspection, which is supposed to have led to the decay of many of those private and domestic duties, which are the brightest ornaments of individuals and families. "There are no pastors now," exclaim some, who ask, "What is the cause why the former days were better than these?" But, perhaps, the wise man would again say, "Thou inquirest not wisely concerning this." That ministers are more eminently public men than they were formerly, must be admitted; but who will venture to affirm, that this is a crime? or to deny that it is an advance beyond the excellences of the first Dissenters? Persecution drove our ancestors into privacy; and the narrower limits of their charge rendered a closer inspection possible and natural; but our greater liberty has opened to us new fields for exertion; and the extension of our flocks requires that the labour which once excelled in depth, should expand into breadth. But as zeal is infectious, the private members of the churches, who once expected every thing to be done for them, now learn to do much themselves. This is unquestionably inculcated in the apostolic letters to the churches. That ministers should regard themselves according to their master's charge, as "the lights of the world, and the salt of the

earth," is surely not to be deplored; and as they are not omnipresent, or omnipotent, they cannot, at the same time, be labouring for the conversion of the world, and the edification of the church; except as the latter party should feel itself edified, when Christ's kingdom is extended.

To address public meetings of bible and tract societies, and to travel and preach for missions, as well as to keep in motion for these objects that mighty modern engine, the press, consumes more time, and thought, and energy, than those who merely look on and read, or listen, would imagine; while the ordinary services of ministers in the church are not diminished, but considerably increased. If, therefore, the pastors of the present day have, in some instances, relinquished the useful toils of their predecessors, it has been to undertake more onerous and more consuming labours. Should any say, "These things ye should have done, and not left the others undone;" it may be replied, that it is only by a figure that a minister can be made a host, a system; and the disappointed hopes of those who would convert bold figures into grave facts, prove nothing but their own decline in the wisdom and kind consideration which the limitation of human powers demands.

Our merciful and faithful high priest has, in his wisdom and grace, provided a substitute for some of those private, pastoral labours, which a more expanded benevolence has rendered impossible. If ministers are not so frequent and minute in catechising the young, the Sabbath schools, in a great measure, supply that defect; and by occasional addresses to them, the

pastor does, once in a quarter of a year, what his predecessors did every week. The efforts to which he urges the private members of the flock, preserve them from the evil consequences that might otherwise arise from the comparative infrequency of his pastoral visits; for, by teaching, we learn; and we have an inspired promise, that "he who watereth others, shall be watered also himself." While, therefore, we hazard nothing in affirming, that dissenting ministers have now less leisure than formerly, for, in fact, the greater part of them have none at all, the churches, if they wisely keep pace with them, lose little by the change from duties more private, and more anxiously minute, to those which are more public, more expensive, and more beneficial to the world.

To another accusation of diminished piety, it is necessary to pay the most serious attention. For it has, of late, become common with members of the Establishment to accuse Dissenters of having become political, departing from the pure spirituality of their excellent Puritan and Nonconformist fathers. Recrimination is the worst species of defence; but to show the insincerity of accusers, may take off the edge of an unjust accusation. How, then, has it happened that the excellences of our forefathers were never discovered, or, at least, never confessed, till they were deemed necessary to serve as a foil to those who inherit their principles? And if good trees do not bear evil fruit, why are the founders lauded as the excellent of the earth; while the edifice for which they laboured, suffered, and bled, is denounced as an unreasonable and pernicious schism?

But facts are more within our province than motives. As the transition from night to day is gradual ; neither the first Reformers, nor the early Puritans, saw at once all the evils of the system from which they emerged, or all the consequences to which their separation would lead. The Presbyterians, who led the march of Dissent, were so far from being hostile to the principles of an Establishment, that, in their zeal to substitute their own system for that of the Episcopacy, they stained the cause of Dissent with the foul blot of intolerance. But the Independents, who rose out as quickly from the Presbyterians as these sprung from the first Protestants, were, in their essential principles, opposed, from the first, to an Established Church interwoven with the state. While the older body has dwindled almost to annihilation, the younger, including the Baptists, who are as much Independents as those who bear that name, has so multiplied and extended, as to become *the* Dissenters by emphasis. This has necessarily given a new character to the body, which the smaller numbers of the original Independents could not impart. But as zeal without knowledge, like a man running hastily in the dark, stumbles upon that which exposes it to ludicrous falls, they who are eager to accuse Dissenters of apostacy from the spirit of their fathers, charge them with Socinianism ; the spot of a minute fraction composed of those who, professing to be Presbyterians, have this single point of resemblance ; a lurking desire for the endowments, and the power, which may place them above all dependence on the popular will.

The opposition of the Independents to all state

churches, is but the necessary consequence of their adherence to the principles they have derived from the Scriptures, by the aid of Ainsworth and Goodwin, Owen and Howe. If those celebrated men were more quiescent under the overwhelming force of opposing systems, whether Episcopalian, or Presbyterian; so were the witnesses for truth, who lurked in the desart, before the Reformation, less stirring and efficient than Latimer, Ridley, or Hooper. To sigh in secret may be the duty of an evil time; though, in more auspicious days, it may be imperative on us to "lift up our voice like a trumpet." That which is patience and prudence, when activity could produce nothing but ruin, is cowardice and sloth, when zeal would secure triumph. Do the clergy of the present day, especially those who are termed evangelical, limit themselves to the methods and the measure of their predecessors? Yet, who would be allowed to accuse them of apostacy from the spirit of their fathers?

If any blame must attach to the present conflict, between established and voluntary churches, with whom did it commence? It is not attempted to be denied, that the voluntary, not to say the Independent churches, may plead prescription; so that being first in the field, they could have supplanted no others, and there could have been no contest, till Constantine superseded the original system, by the power of the state. If, after this, there has been a perpetual struggle, let the blame fall on the first meddlers with things as they were, and as they ought ever to have been.

But, to descend to later times, in order to award cen-

sure where it is now due, have the established clergy ever ceased to condemn Dissent as schism? Would that we were not constrained to ask, have they ever intermitted the arts of persecution as far as it was within their reach? We are compelled by justice, if we were not induced by love, to say, that *all* are not included in this censure; for there are still, as there have always been, even in the worst times, members and ministers of the Establishment, who have possessed so much of the spirit of Christianity, as to be zealous dissenters from the high church spirit of persecution. But these, unhappily, are the exceptions, not the rule; and they have been left to deplore and condemn what they could not prevent.

If it be said that Graham's work on Ecclesiastical Establishments gave the first blow that led to the battle which is now raging, it may be replied, that this work crept quietly through the press, and produced little effect, till the Society of St. David's elicited, by a premium for the best defence of Establishments, Mr. Wilkes' work on that subject. The premiums by which Dissenters have called forth prize essays, have been offered for works of a more catholic character.

The Society for Promoting Ecclesiastical Knowledge, has given great offence; but its "Library" consisted principally of works on the defensive; for so numerous, and so oppressive were the impositions of the opposite party, that they left little leisure for any other tactics. Personal abuse, and imputation of evil motives, were dealt out with no sparing hand against the writers; but they confidently appealed to their tracts to prove

that they never forgot that men might differ from them, without forfeiting the respect due to purity of character, and sincerity of motive. The Voluntary Church Society of Scotland, and its ephemeral offspring in England, might appeal to their vocal or printed addresses, to prove that they studied to speak the truth indeed, but in love. As we cease not to be men and citizens when we become Christians, politics, like arts and sciences, commerce and manufactures, may be the proper province of a disciple of Christ; and it is very possible to mistake timidity for spirituality, when we shrink from the discharge of the duties required of us as members of a free state which governs itself. Are the institutions of society to be brought into conformity with the law of the Supreme Ruler, by men who neither know nor approve it; or by those who are enlightened to see, and sanctified to do "that good, and perfect, and acceptable will of God?" When Satan said of the kingdoms of the world, "They are mine, and I give them to whom I please;" some deem it a proof of high spirituality to believe him; but others think it more spiritual to believe the faithful and true witness, who, as prince of the kings of the earth, said, "All power in heaven and in earth is given to me." That the exercise of political duties is fraught with danger, is true; but to escape that danger, by neglecting the duty, is a sin. Dissenters, in general, whatever their censors may say, have erred most on what would be called the safe side; but it is safer still to err on neither side. We know him that condemned, as hypocrites, those who threw upon other men's shoulders burdens which they themselves would not

touch with one of their fingers. If the relations of man with man require that the duties of civil government be discharged by some of the inhabitants of our country, we ought to produce a clear dispensation from some one higher than the Pope, before we presume to throw all civic burdens upon others, and refuse to take any share of them ourselves. A cowardly piety that fears to encounter the common duties and dangers of life, was the parent of monachism, which, in the end, brought forth more sin than sanctity.

In attempting an estimate of the whole body of Dissenters, every sect has been included; but if each communion were separately reviewed, the Presbyterians, as the oldest denomination, would demand the first attention. Those who have called themselves English Presbyterians or Unitarians, and are generally termed by others, Socinians, have, to say the least, not shared in the increase which has been the lot of almost every other sect. They have become more absolutely identified with the creed of Priestly, and have now no connection with the other denominations. Should the endowments to which they cling, be finally restored to their proper objects, it may be hoped that, thrown upon the people for support, the ministers of this body might furnish materials for a future historian to employ in a chapter on the state of religion.

At present, the dying state of their congregations, the extinction of some, and the rarity of the instances of the creation of others to supply their place, prove that there must be something wrong in this body. Dr. Priestly ascribed his serious spirit to his Calvinistic education, in which, no doubt, many could have joined him;

but as that generation died away, and another arose under the undivided influence of Socinianism, the spirit of the ancient Dissenters was exchanged for that of the world. This alone can account for the inefficiency of Unitarianism. For it is not destitute of men of education and talent; it has large funds, if not properly their own; and it now has an open field. Why, then, does it effect nothing? Its own principles, of the attributes of Deity, the moral government of God, the mission of the Saviour, and the resurrection of the dead, might, in the hands of able and zealous men, produce considerable effect on the public mind. But it seems that, for want of the vital doctrines of the Deity and atonement of Christ, the influences of the Spirit, and the regeneration of our nature, all other principles are like the limbs of a Samson without the animating soul. The oldest and most powerful body of Dissenters is, therefore, a nonentity as to any efforts for the salvation of the poor neglected part of our population; while almost every other body is making accessions to its numbers in this most honourable way. The benevolent attempt would probably lead the English Presbyterians to perceive, that they have abandoned the vital principles of Christianity, by which it spread through the world, and by which the original Presbyterians once extended their denomination till they became *the* Dissenters by emphasis. Their duty would thus prove their interest; for, by relinquishing endowments, to which they have no just claim, they would be made to feel how weak are their own proper resources; and, by labouring in the true vocation of a religious body, for the salvation of the world, they

would discover the practical value of those evangelical sentiments which they have rejected as the excrescences of a scholastic theology.

The other part of the Presbyterian body, which may be termed Scotch, has exhibited, during the last thirty years, very satisfactory proofs of a more healthy state. One specimen of its ministers will be given in the biographical department; and it is believed, that no exception to the prevalent orthodoxy of the body exists; while its unity has been advanced by a very auspicious event. The Burghers and Antiburghers were divided upon a question that strangers find it difficult to understand; and when they have overcome that difficulty, they ask, why cannot those who agree on all other points, exercise mutual forbearance on this? The two bodies have, at length, come to this conclusion. For as a union had been effected in Nova Scotia and in Ireland, the efforts that were subsequently made for the same object, in Scotland and England, succeeded; and the Burghers and Antiburghers are now the United Secession Presbytery. Of this, both the cause and the effect are good; for it is an approximation towards the answer of our Redeemer's prayer for his disciples, "that they all may be one."

The catholicity of this body in England, is proved by the union of its ministers and leading members with other denominations, in the various efforts that are made for the extension of the kingdom of Christ. He must be more than a cursory observer, who has discovered the difference between these Presbyterians

and the Independents; for they often officiate in each others pulpits, and are of one heart, if not entirely of one mind.

Of the Independents it is not necessary to say much; for, as they form the larger body of Dissenters, they have furnished the principal materials for the general review. Their excellences and faults have, therefore, been exposed to notice; and if any thing more should be added, it would be censure, rather than praise. The tendency to conformity to the world may be charged, both upon the ministers and the congregations. A foolish imitation of the established priesthood in some, makes it no matter of surprise that a few others have absolutely conformed; while many, as preachers, lead us to think they have taken for their model, Saurin, rather than Owen, or Howe, Baxter, or Whitfield. In the members of the churches, conformity to the world, in dress and company, and eagerness for gain, leave more occasion for discipline, than disposition to study and obey its wholesome restraints. If men of other communions can discover a counterpoise to these evils, it would be a balm to the heart of the historian to learn the welcome truth.

A tendency to rivalship in the churches, instead of regarding the prosperity of each one as the gain of the whole, may, perhaps, be said to be the natural fruit of Independency; but those who regard this form of church polity as the appointment of the Sovereign Lord of all, will rather say, that this fault is but a confirmation of the maxim, that the corruption of the best things produces the worst. The co-operation in

labours of benevolence, which has, of late years, greatly increased, is the best, perhaps the only, cure for an evil so much to be deplored.

Among the Baptists, the increase of numbers has happily been equalled by the diffusion of sacred learning. New academical institutions have increased the demand, as well as the supply, of well educated ministers; and thrown into the shade, the crude men, who have, even when not Antinomians themselves, created a taste for that worst of heresies. The growing liberality of this body, and the efforts of many of its best ministers to break down the wall of separation between them and Pædobaptists, have been the result of improvement in Christian piety and charity, and in that high preference for the essentials of religion which mourns over the alienation of Christ's disciples from each other. The labours of Mr. Robert Hall to diffuse, what may be called, catholic communion, were crowned with distinguished success; for many were induced to adopt his views; and others, who had previously thought with him, were emboldened to break through the hindrances which hitherto prevented their acting on their more liberal sentiments. In Bristol, a very beautiful and impressive scene was exhibited, in 1833, where the Lord's Supper was celebrated by a Baptist and Pædobaptist church, united for this service; the pastors of each denomination sharing in the exercises, and contributing to the general joy. As the Independents and Baptists differed but on one point, which had been long debated without converting either party to the opinions of the other, it was most highly desirable that they should

come to this conclusion; that their difference should no longer prevent their unity in the bond of those greater principles in which they agree. This consummation, so devoutly to be wished, has furnished one of the most refreshing instances of the improved spirit of the times; and, as the Pædobaptists had perseveringly acted on the catholic principle, its more general adoption by the Baptists must be recorded as a proof of their advance in that charity, which is greater than faith or hope. A disposition to swell their numbers by proselytism from other evangelical communions, instead of the more honourable effects of their ministry in making converts to the faith of Christ, has been charged upon this body; but it is hoped that this evil has, of late years, rather diminished than increased, which is a good omen for the religious prosperity of the body; for proselytes are not usually gained from the best elements of other societies; while the real advancement of the kingdom of Christ is, in this course, little or nothing. To this body of Dissenters it is a serious disadvantage, that a single rite is pushed into undue importance; and even that rite of baptism is itself made an element of strife, which destroys its devotional effect. On the other hand, it must be admitted, that their peculiar opinion opposes a strong barrier to the general tendency to confound the church with the world.

A proposal to unite the Secession churches with the Congregationalists, was not followed with the desired results, and perhaps the *authority* necessarily involved in Presbyterianism, to say nothing of its looser terms of communion, renders impracticable, at

present, any other union than that which already exists in their frequent fraternal intercourse and co-operation.

Of the Quakers it is difficult for those who are not of that body to speak with accuracy. They are, to a great extent, a mystery to other Christians, who cannot, however, observe their co-operation in the Bible Society, and in the British and Foreign schools, and occasionally in other benevolent and religious undertakings, without cherishing the hope, that the vital spirit of true religion has been stirring among them, and making an effort to advance. To those who regard evangelical truth as the seed of all holy affections and good works, the sentiments of any religious body appear of the utmost consequence. This stamps with value and importance the "Letter to a Friend on the Authority, Purpose, and Effects of Christianity, especially on the Doctrine of Redemption; by Joseph John Gurney." If the extensive sale of this work indicates its welcome reception among those for whom it was written, and to whom its author belongs, its superiority to the former standards of Quakerism would be a proof of their improvement.

But a great schism has arisen in this body, hitherto so compact. We notice it here, because it was solely a question of personal religion, and of adherence to these doctrines, which are essential to salvation. Many valuable members of the Society of Friends, first in Manchester, and afterwards in London, and other places, becoming dissatisfied with its doctrine and ministry, withdrew from the communion. The causes appear to have been two, doctrinal and prac-

tical. Elias Hicks, an American Friend, having gone to fearful lengths in Deism, drew great numbers after him. Many of the more serious and reflecting Quakers in this country, however, took the alarm, and began to suspect a tendency, in the doctrine of the light within, to alienate the mind from the revelation contained in the Scriptures. Some very serious and sensible tracts were written by this party, to prove that the Society had departed from the doctrine of the prophets and apostles.

From such reflections, it was easy to pass to others, on the practical working of the Quakers' system. Some of the Society, therefore, affirming that the ministry among them was barren and inefficient, appealed to facts, to prove that the genuine effects of the Christian ministry were not to be found among them. What must have been noticed by every discerning auditor, was now affirmed by some among themselves, that different and contrary doctrines were delivered by the speakers in the same assembly; to say nothing of the prevalence of silent meetings, which, however they may be defended, as edifying occasionally, and to the better informed seniors, could not, as a standing rule, be instructive to any, and especially to the rising race. Others were grieved to see various bodies of Christians actively employed in labours of benevolence for the salvation of the irreligious, in which the Society of Friends took no share. This produced "An Appeal to the Society of Friends, in behalf of Missions, by a Member of the Society;" which was followed by the voyage of Daniel Wheeler to the islands in the South Seas.

This expedition was, however, more creditable to the intentions than the judgment of the body. For what could be done by a man who could not speak the language of the people, to whom he fancied himself sent? He must have merely looked on, had not the missionaries from other bodies of Christians acted as his interpreters. If he had no other message than that which is contained in the doctrines of our common Christianity, it was already delivered to greater advantage by those who had gone more rationally to work, by devoting years of self-denying labour to the acquisition of the language; but if he wished to disseminate the peculiar sentiments of Friends, he was dependent on interpreters, who could not fairly be expected to assist in propagating among their converts, doctrines opposed to their own. This was, therefore, as might have been expected, as nugatory as it was expensive. Hannah Kilham, the widow of the founder of the Kilhamite Methodists, having joined the Society of Friends, devoted herself with a noble, if not a discreet, heroism, to a similar mission among the natives of the western coast of Africa; but it is not known that she accomplished her generous object. These efforts, however, may do good to the Quakers, if not to the heathen; for persons of sense and education, as the Friends unquestionably are, cannot fail to discover a radical defect in their system, by perceiving that it is not fitted to accomplish the object of Christianity, which is, to subdue the world to the faith of Christ. Their ministry cannot even secure the continuance of their own body; and is utterly powerless for all the greater efforts which Christians are bound to make for

the expulsion of idolatory and false religion from the face of the earth.

In the Friends' Monthly Magazine, towards the end of 1829, Mr. Davis, of Taunton, discovering the duty, advocated the cause of missions, and was supported by several anonymous correspondents.

The withdrawment of many of the most valuable members from the Society was naturally deplored; but their peaceable spirit, and their activity in the cause of religion, evinced the purity of their motives, and appears to be a proof, not of the decline, but of the revival of religion in the Society. Could they have produced the reform for which they pleaded, the seceders would have preferred retaining their old connections; but, failing in this, they either stood alone, or joined other communions, in hope of obtaining among them those religious advantages which they deemed it their duty to seek. At their annual meeting, in London, 1837, the quarterly meeting of Westmoreland stated, that some of the Society had received Baptism and the Lord's Supper, according to the views of other Christian societies; and it was discussed, whether such persons were exposed to exclusion. The journals of the day announced, that the Evangelical Quakers held meetings for worship on Sunday and Wednesday, at the Paul's Head, Cateaton Street.

Mr. Tuke, in a very temperate and charitable pamphlet, attempted to show that the deistical sentiments of Elias Hicks are not those of the Society of Friends; and even those who are not quite satisfied with his statements, must be pleased to see how much

nearer he approaches to the faith of all orthodox Christians, than to what have been usually supposed to be the principles of Quakers. He observes, "that a secession from the Society has taken place in America, by Elias Hicks and his adherents, and more recently another, but much smaller division, in England, by John Wilkinson and others. The views of these two classes, though both opposed to the Society from which they have separated, are not less at variance from each other; while the latter class is again subdivided into smaller sections; some, with Mr. Wilkinson, going to the Establishment, (but occasionally holding religious meetings, the service of which he himself conducts,) some have joined the Irvingites, some the Methodists, and some the Independents, or Baptists, while others are hesitating what course to take."

This contest seems to have sprung from a good cause, and to promise good effects. The radical evil of the constitution of the Society, what is called birth membership, by which men in a state of nature join in administering the affairs of a religious body, has been detected by some of the dissentients, and their separation appears to have arisen from a just dissatisfaction with the paucity of religious truth, exhibited in the meetings of the Friends, and the want of those spiritual effects which should accompany the services of the church of God. As there are many striking excellences in this community, its improvement rather than its extinction is to be desired. But its own laws appear to stand in the way of much hope, as they are little else than a substitute for those of Jesus Christ. Instead of an immediate appeal to the Scrip-

tures, the Friends quote the testimony of their founders; and their book of discipline, which is a remarkable specimen of a people, most opposed to Popery, quoting the fathers and the canons. But they have been set a thinking; and though the secession of those who have discovered some of the evils of the system, may seem to leave these evils to operate uncontrolled, there are others left who may still accomplish the object so much to be desired, the purification and advancement of a society which has borne a noble testimony against the popery of a Christian order of priesthood, against the authority of human governments in the church of God, and against the unchristian and inhuman practice of war.

In 1837, was published the following demi-official document. "For some time past, there has been a division among the Friends, or Quakers, in America, which has terminated in a separation from the body. The seceders from the faith of the original Friends, and who are the minority in point of numbers, have embraced sentiments, in many respects, coinciding with those of the Unitarians; but as they would fain persuade the public that their faith is the same as that of the original Friends, the Society in this land have thought proper to disclaim any connection with them, or unity with their opinions. Hence the last yearly meeting, held in London, issued the following official document, which, while it refutes the misrepresentation of some, will correct the misunderstanding of others, respecting the real opinions of the Friends."

Then follows a kind of confession of faith, chiefly composed of texts of Scripture, in which the most

important points of Christianity are clearly avowed, and all who contradict them, disowned. To most it will appear so much more orthodox than the writings of the first Quakers, as to prove that the Society, who naturally study those documents, understand them in the best sense, and though this is often really misunderstanding them, the mistake is a happy one.

Isaac Crewdson, of Manchester, having published "The Beacon," in which he delivered a faithful warning against the American heresy, called "Hicksism," his book, instead of being hailed as a faithful testimony to truth, was discountenanced by the Society, and the author was urged to suppress the publication. He very justly demanded that its errors should first be pointed out; but this was refused. The consequence of his being removed, along with another friend of kindred sentiments, was the resignation of many esteemed Friends, at Manchester, of their membership in the Society. Their letters of resignation were most honourable to them, for the benevolent spirit which they breathe, and the clear declaration of scriptural truth which they contain. They protest against the unscriptural views of Quakerism concerning the Scriptures, and the inward light; and plead for the apostolic testimony to justification by faith alone. It is painful to observe, that a meeting, held by the most evangelical Quakers, for the reading of the Scriptures, was denounced by what may be called, the authorities in the Society, as unauthorized.

It is vain to attempt to conceal the fact, that the Society, while condemning Elias Hicks, never suffered

itself to investigate the most interesting question, whether his errors were not the genuine offspring of the sentiments of the earliest Friends. These, however, were always assumed to be true, and were appealed to, along with the Scriptures, as standards of doctrine. The Church of Rome will admit the authority of Scripture, if we will admit the authority of the fathers, and councils, and popes, whom she associates with the word of God. "Early Friends and Dr. Edward Ash," was the title of a work, which showed, by large quotations from the earliest writers among the Quakers, that their principles were utterly unscriptural, and the genuine fountain from which Elias Hicks drew his bitter waters.

At last, a separate body, called Evangelical Friends, has been formed. It published, at the close of the yearly meeting of the Old Society, in 1837, an address to evangelical Friends, and to all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Its first paragraph will show its spirit and design. "The comfort we have derived from Christian communion with each other, during the course of the time we have been in London, has led us affectionately to remember and to sympathize with those of our dear friends who are scattered about in places, lonely as regards the blessed privilege of Christian fellowship. Being greatly encouraged by the agreement which we find to exist among us on those fundamental doctrines which the Gospel recognizes as the unity of faith, and also respecting the origin and tendency of those views in the writings of the early Friends, from which we are constrained to dissent, we think there is good ground

to hope, that, being thus united, the great Head of the church may have a work for us to do in the various localities where he has been pleased to place us."

After recognizing the Scriptures as a complete revelation, they "affirm a belief, that any professed subsequent revelation must, of necessity, be a delusion. The sentiments of evangelical Friends having been painfully misrepresented on the blessed doctrine of the Holy Spirit, we consider it due to ourselves, and to you, and to the Christian church generally, emphatically to declare our firm and unreserved belief in this doctrine, in all its scriptural extent and fulness. Whilst renouncing the notion of a universal, saving, inward light, as utterly destitute of a scriptural foundation, we believe that it is by the operation of the Holy Spirit that man is convinced of sin, and enabled to believe in and lay hold on a Saviour; that regeneration is the communication of vitality to the soul, which before was dead in trespasses and sins. We accept the great foundation doctrine of faith, and justification through faith alone, as understood by the great body of evangelical Protestants. Under a painful sense of the incalculable loss many of us have sustained from perverted views on the subject of prayer, we venture most earnestly to entreat you to enter upon a scriptural examination of this duty and blessed privilege. There are those, who, in this, as in other instances, have put the guard on the wrong side; and, by surrounding the throne of grace with a Sinai-like awfulness, have, we fear, ministered but too fatally to the indifference, indolence, pride, and unbelief of man's naturally hard heart; and contrary to the general tenor, and in oppo-

sition to the express language of Holy Scripture, have inculcated the idea that none should pray without a perceptible supernatural motion thereto. We should very earnestly exhort one another to a *practical* application of Scripture principles, by family devotion; and, moreover, by meeting together for the purpose of presenting our supplications to the God of all grace. We should, of course, recommend the reading of portions of Holy Scripture, at all devotional meetings. This leads us to remark on the large amount of individual blessing which, we believe, has resulted from meetings for the sacred study of Holy Scripture." This document, from which we have taken, only such detached sentences as express the points of variation from the original Society, contains also an assertion of one important truth, to which that Society has ever borne a faithful testimony, that Christ, being the sole high priest of the church, there is no order of priests among Christians, though there are evangelical ministers; and that all Christians are equally "a royal priesthood."

This separation in England seems on the verge of being imitated in America; for Elisha Bates, having maintained a contest with Friends there, chiefly on the resurrection of the Lord, and the last judgment, coming over to this country, exchanged the views of the Quakers, on Baptism and the Lord's Supper, for the ordinary opinion on those rites, and was baptized by a dissenting minister. His own society, on his return, adopted measures which led him to publish "his resignation of his right of membership in the Society of Friends." It were much to be wished that

the new infusion of evangelical sentiments and spirit into a people distinguished for thoughtfulness, prudence, and firmness, may produce an effect, not only beneficial to themselves, but also auspicious to the world. The evil of multiplying sects may, in a great degree, be obviated, by a spirit of candour and charity towards all other communions who hold the essential truths of the Gospel; and by a determination to learn by their former mistakes, to keep themselves open to conviction and improvement, which may still further diminish the distance between them and others. Nor is it unreasonable to expect, that the evangelical Quakers will bring with them benefits to other denominations, who have something to learn from them, on principles and practices, essential to the highest interests of the Christian church.

The best friends of the original Society may justly fear the consequences of the withdrawment of so many of the most enlightened and spiritual members, who have, in some instances, been succeeded in office by those who are most remote from scriptural views. The only hope for the body lies in the thoughtful character of many of its members, and the influence of divine grace on some, who, though still lingering in a communion to which they have been long attached, are not satisfied that all is right, but are thrown into deeper search after truth and duty, by recent events. A second effort for reformation may terminate more happily than the last, and may be aided by the increased piety and usefulness of the evangelical separation. Nothing, however, will effectually serve the cause of religion among the Quakers, but unpre-

judiced examination of the writings of early Friends, and a consequent abandonment of the deference paid to them, by placing them almost on a level with the Scriptures, as standards of orthodoxy and piety.

The present position of the Friends is critical and perilous, for they have lost many of their evangelical members, which has left the Society under the uncontrolled influence of its worst elements; while these are under the guilt of having opposed a noble effort for their welfare, and doomed their communion to a perseverance in pernicious error. Some who have left them, say the whole system is too corrupt to be mended; but others hope that the apparent failure of the effort for reform will lead to ultimate success. Dr. Wardlaw, of Glasgow, has contributed to the triumph of scriptural truth among the seceders, by a publication, in which he showed the radical evil of that doctrine of inward light, which leads the Quakers away from the guidance of the inspired Scriptures.

The Moravians are, from their quiescent character, in danger of being overlooked, did not their missions solicit notice and support from other denominations. But it is not easy to form an accurate estimate of the religious state of a people that seldom attracts others within its sanctuaries, or presents itself to public notice by aggressive efforts. If we judge of life by growth, we could scarcely form a high estimate of those who seem to be stationary; and if it be said that this rule can be applied only to youth, the Moravians are, as an English sect, of the same age as the Methodists; but how different has been their progress! This may, perhaps, be ascribed, in part, to a peculiar circumstance,

that their ministers have been, in many instances, Germans, whose imperfect knowledge of English, or defective pronunciation, has impeded their usefulness. It may, however, be asked, why any religious society should unnecessarily employ men that cannot attain all the ends of the Christian ministry? If foreigners edify the Moravian congregations, this is only *one* of the objects of the Christian church; and the other, which is to convert the world, cannot be neglected without injury to the church.

Their missions, however, are considered the glory of the Moravians, who deem themselves specially called to this work. But nothing is more fallacious, or pernicious, than judging of calls to duty by any other rule than that of the divine word. A mission church is a fine figure, when employed to save Christians from the sin of neglecting the souls of the heathen; but, like all other figures, is apt to mislead, and should be tried by sober reason, in proper speech. The Christian church became a grand missionary society, by first spreading the truth all around its immediate locality, by which it was furnished with the men, and the means, for more distant missions. The Moravians, instead of this, derive much of their resources for missionary enterprises from others. A mission church, in the fullest sense of that figure, is not known to Scripture, and could scarcely exist; for it must be wholly divided into missions, which would then have none to support them. There must be some reason to suspect an unhealthy state of religion in any church, in the present day of activity, if it is not diffusing the Gospel in every direction; and ministers should not locate themselves, or

be located by others, in any country where their speech forbids the hope of one most important branch of usefulness.

But the English ministers among the Moravians, are little known by their labours, or usefulness, in our country, from which they derive considerable supplies for their missionaries, by the favour of other denominations, especially the Independents, whose ministers travel and preach, and make collections for the Moravian missions. There must be serious reasons for alarm, in this body which is doing so little for the population around, which is in a state scarcely less heathenish than those for whose salvation it has sent out messengers to the ends of the earth. If other denominations were not more active and useful, they would not have, either the inclination, or the ability, to furnish those aids on which the Moravian missions chiefly depend.

Of the Wesleyan Methodists, it is not necessary to speak; for as they sometimes disclaim the title of Dissenters, so their activity and increase prove that they have not lost the spirit derived from their founder. The separations from their body have naturally been accompanied with charges of departure from their original principles and practice; but this, if true, may not be a fault; and some of the changes in this body are manifest improvements. A better informed ministry, and more intellectual preaching and writing, may have rendered them less fitted for the class of persons among whom they originated; but these are provided for by the Separatists; and a higher grade of society is edified by the advancement of what is now the Old Connection.

If the Calvinistic Methodists have not much increased in England, they have furnished additions to the Independent churches, as the two bodies, agree in doctrine; and many of the ministers, educated in the Countess of Huntingdon's College, have become pastors of Independent flocks. Whole congregations, also, have made similar transitions. An improvement in theology has been observed; for the tendency to Ultra-calvinism, which arose out of the separation from the Arminian Methodists, has yielded to more just views of the system which derives its name from the Reformer of Geneva.

The co-operation of this communion in all the efforts that are now making for the spiritual welfare of mankind, may justly be regarded as a proof of the continuance of Whitfield's spirit, in the body of which he was the chief ornament. In Wales, these are the parties meant when *the* Methodists are mentioned; and they deserve to be highly esteemed for their works' sake, as they have spread the knowledge and spirit of religion where heathenish ignorance and vice before reigned.

Of the spirit of religion among the Sandemanians, little is known beyond their own circle, which seems not to have been enlarged, during the last thirty years. As a body of English Dissenters, its birth was as inauspicious, as its history has been inglorious. It contended for no great truth, as Luther, for justification by faith; nor for any important principle in Christian fellowship, as those churches which made regeneration essential to a member of a church; for those from whom the Sandemanians separated, held the same

doctrines, and the same discipline, in all their essential features, as the new communion maintained. But what may be termed the metaphysics of faith, fascinated Sandeman; and, for the sake of this refinement, he recklessly divided Christians, and treated all from whom he differed, with bitter scorn. The first appearance of the sect was bold and active; but the roaring cataract was a summer flood, which passed away, leaving nothing behind but desolation and slime; and, during the last thirty years, they have scarcely been heard of in England. In Scotland, they have been divided between the original body and a modification of it, which has adopted the principle of the Baptists; but in Ireland, the spirit of Sandemanianism has infected many who have quitted the Establishment, and has been imparted to the Plymouth brethren in this country. Here Millenarianism, engrafted on the crab stock, is producing strange hybrid fruits. A profession of extraordinary catholicism is combined with the sectarian pride of the old Sandemanian school; and an auspicious study of the Scriptures is neutralized by the fanaticism of Millenarianism, which is nearly allied to Irvingism. The better features of this body are seen in the works they have undertaken for the illustration of the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures, and in the aid they have lent to the missions of other Christians in the East; to say nothing of the proofs of sincerity they give, in the sacrifice of property to a kind of community of goods; but the conceited fondness they show for the exhortations of the brethren, sinks the pastoral office, which Christ instituted, into the shadow of a great name. This communion is,

however, too young to have either a fixed character, or a religious history; and while it furnishes little aliment to hope, it exhibits much to awaken fear. A large proportion of its members have recently emerged from the Establishment, ignorant of the character of that sect on which they are engrafted; but supposing that it is new to all the world, because it is new to them. The Millenarianism, which is not ostensibly a term of communion, is as restless as it is fanatical, and gives to the body a character which is most ominous for the future.

The Swedenborgians adopt a phraseology, which is not sufficiently intelligible to others to afford the means of pronouncing a sentence on their religious improvement or decline; but this communion is not of such extent as to demand any lengthened comment. The attention paid by them to Immanuel Swedenbourg's pretended revelations, must neutralize the effects of the Scriptures, like the Quakers' attention to the inward light; while the Swedenborgian notion of the person and redemption of Christ, seems to be any thing but what would lead to the attainment and advance of true religion.

To a pious member of the state church, this review of the religious state of dissenting communions may appear alarming, especially on account of the divisions exhibited among Christians, whose unity is their glory. But he may not be aware, that the Act of Uniformity, passed by the parliament of the second Charles, that disgrace to the British throne, was not ratified in heaven; and that, under its iron rule, many of the varieties of Dissent lurk within the established pale; where an additional principle of disunion pre-

vails to an alarming extent, in the tendency to Popery, proclaimed by the Oxford Tracts. If their authors declare unambiguously their expectation of conquering the sectarian tendency of the times, by securing the predominance of the old Popish figment of the unity of the church; the toscin of alarm has been sounded in the pulpits of Oxford itself, on the threatened revival of Popery. Nor should it be unnoticed, that the sister university of Cambridge exhibits the picture of a divided church, by congratulating herself on her freedom from the Oxford leaven. That the Oxford Tracts will create a powerful reaction in favour of Protestantism, cannot be doubted. The Establishment of our country is not so destitute of men embued with the spirit of true religion, as to leave the papistical party to pursue their journey towards Rome, without felling trees and digging fosses, to obstruct their march.

The conflict is, indeed, begun; and, therefore, the only difference between sectarianism within the Establishment, and that which exists among Dissenters, lies here, that, in the former case, a profession of uniformity is belied by a real variety; and in the latter, the diversity is honestly avowed. The integrity of the two thousand Nonconformists, who suffered the loss of their livings, because they could not honestly declare their unfeigned assent and consent to every thing in the Book of Common Prayer, is set off to high advantage, by the contrast with the conduct of those who unblushingly condemn what they have professed to approve, holding the emoluments of a church which they are labouring to betray to its foes.

But as the faults of one party are not rendered virtues by being equally shared with another, the religious state of the Dissenters is still deteriorated, in proportion as it is marked by disunion, not to say, alienation of heart. The perfection of union is, however, not to be hoped for, but by the perfection of holiness in heaven. That the church of Christ was, only for a short time, of "one heart and one soul," we know, by the Acts of the Apostles, and by the Epistle to the Galatians, which was written to counteract the efforts of a party; nor can we expect, among myriads of men, of different capacities and education, absolute uniformity of sentiment and practice. The boasted unity of the Church of Rome is known, by all who are in her secrets, to be hollow and hypocritical; and her priests are obliged to have recourse to the distinction between articles of faith and opinions of individuals. There never was, then, and never will be, on earth, and, perhaps, we may add, heaven too, any other union among Christians, but that of affection, springing from common faith in a very small number of essential truths. To us, the doctrine of justification by faith, appears to be that vital principle in which all Christians are one. In this, there is more harmony among evangelical Dissenters, than is to be found in the Established Church. They "love one another, for this truth which dwelleth in them all." But this is not enough. They are bound to love all who hold this truth, and to regard, as Christian brethren, Churchmen who maintain this doctrine, rather than Dissenters who deny it. This they unquestionably do, whatever their struggles with

the Establishment may seem to say in contradiction. Many of the evangelical clergy have done much to destroy this feeling; but it still lives among Dissenters; and they, therefore, rejoice in every evidence of its existence among those from whom they differ. That it has not been weakened by the contentions of the times, is not asserted; but many of the most prominent advocates of the voluntary principle are reluctantly goaded on by a sorrowful conviction, that the opposite system is essentially hostile to the union of Christians, which is founded on their being all alike brethren.

To conclude. Who, but the omniscient Searcher of hearts, is adequate to pass a just judgment on the spiritual state of such an aggregate as the Protestant Dissenters of England? The principal bodies which form the mass, hold all the great truths for which the founders of their churches struggled and suffered, laboured and bled. But the Calvinism which characterized their creed, is somewhat lowered; partly, in theory, by an avowed rejection of reprobation, which was an unnatural excrescence on the system, as propounded by the great Reformer in his youthful days; but, more in practice, by an infrequent and less zealous inculcation of the divine sovereignty, and the election of grace; though without any abatement in the assertion of the utter depravity of man, the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, and justification by faith in the finished work of Christ. The great principles of ecclesiastical communion have been maintained and acted upon; but not inculcated as earnestly as in former days; and, consequently, not so generally under-

stood, or so strictly enforced. For the Methodists have had a powerful, if an insensible effect, on the older communities.

The depth, and vigour, and wisdom of personal religion, and the ancient glory of family worship, it is to be feared, have declined; so that it would be difficult to produce such specimens of eminence, in either as formerly adorned our communions; though no one would be deemed worthy of Christian fellowship, who was known to neglect the worship of God in the secret closet and in the family. But religion has, in later days, come out, more than formerly, from the closet to the stage of public life; and the multiplication of schemes of usefulness has left Christians less time, and it is to be feared, less inclination, for that secret communion with God, without which the soul cannot prosper.

The character of the ministry has undergone a similar change. From being the mere shepherd of a single flock, the pastor finds himself one among many who are "striving together for the faith of the Gospel," and the conversion of the world. This is made a theme of accusation by one of the younger sects, as if the edification of the church were sacrificed to the interests of "them who are without;" but that must be a selfish church, a contradiction in terms, that does not find itself edified by the exhibition of the same truth which called it out of the world. That the alteration has been an improvement, may be known by its effects; for the additions of converts have been much greater than in former times; and there are few churches that have not doubled or trebled their num-

bers, during the last thirty years, except where the circumstances of their localities have rendered this a physical impossibility.

But as prosperity has its dangers, in the increase of numbers, the fellowship of the saints has declined. In large towns, the members know too little of each other, and of their pastor; and the poor are not always provided for with sufficient liberality, nor favoured with that intercourse with their brethren for which our theory contends. There is, perhaps, no remedy for this, but by associating with the elder pastor a younger one, as the French Protestant churches introduce their ministers to the pastoral care; or by maintaining an evangelist to do many of those things which now devolve on one man. A more deeply devotional spirit, in preaching and hearing, is required, to banish the love of display from the pulpit, and of critical amusement from the pews. On the whole, the Dissenters have much cause for gratitude to the God of all grace; for humiliation, that they have not made a greater improvement of circumstances which place them so far above their forefathers; for trembling, lest it should be said, "the prosperity of fools shall destroy them;" and for supplication, that they may find the cause which is dear to them, as much improved in depth, as they see it extended on the surface.

CHAPTER VII.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES OF DISTINGUISHED DISSENTERS.

This chapter will, in some measure, enable the reader to judge for himself of the character of the whole body, and of each separate communion. If civil history becomes interesting and instructive by the sketches it gives of the celebrated men who stamped their character on their times, it is also rendered, in a great degree, independent of them, by the records of political revolutions, and physical conflicts, which fill its pages; but as an ecclesiastical history is destitute of these, it depends almost entirely on an exhibition of the mental and moral character of the men who form the churches of Christ, and constitute its prosperous or adverse fortunes.

Glancing over the whole body of Dissent, we were embarrassed by abundance; for we were presented with a host of men, who, highly distinguished in their own sphere, were fitted to instruct posterity; while each separate communion could urge claims for its own ornaments, to which the historian of the whole could not respond. As the head of the church bestows his gifts with high sovereignty, it was necessary to determine that a constellation in one sect should not

exclude those who might advantageously make another known. Only two or three of each communion, therefore, could be introduced; but some of the minor bodies have furnished none of sufficient eminence to interest or instruct the whole.

The Presbyterians, as the elder branch, are first noticed; and those of England having retained little or nothing but the name and the endowments, we had to introduce men who give a false impression of that communion, to correct which, we have exhibited one of a Scotch sect, who passed his life as a Dissenter n England.

The Independents have so increased in numbers and influence, that a larger space is allotted to them; chiefly by introducing a missionary of that body, who, though he spent his life, and met his death, in a foreign clime, having been educated in an Independent college, and maintained his connection with the denomition, was worthy to be exhibited as a specimen of its character and spirit.

As the Baptists still maintain their ancient distinction, by furnishing very eminent men, so they are entitled to have one of their missionaries, who died in a foreign field, placed on the list of those who have done honour to the dissenting churches of this land.

Among the Quakers, ministers are not so prominent as in other societies; but they have furnished those who have not only adorned their own communion, but have attracted the attention, and won the esteem, of every class of our countrymen.

If no Sandemanians, or Swedenborgians, or Moravians, are introduced, these smaller, and less active

bodies, have presented to our view none whom we could deem calculated to edify the public mind.

Of the Calvinistic and Arminian Methodists, we could have mentioned distinguished men, whom we have omitted, because their episcopal ordination and attachments, seemed to forbid their insertion among Dissenters. The Rev. Rowland Hill is, therefore, not placed among the Calvinistic Methodists, with whom he laboured; nor Dr. Coke among the Wesleyans. But each of these communions has furnished other names worthy of distinction.

What are called laymen, must form the mass of every church; and though they are less prominent than public speakers, their example is so much more generally useful, that it would have been injurious to the interests of religion to pass them by unnoticed.

As the inspired history of Christianity puts high honour on Christian women, we were desirous that the records of their piety and zeal should render our history not only interesting to their own sex, but, through them, a blessing to the rising generation, which is so powerfully influenced by their fostering care.

But where so many had indefeasible claims to notice, perpetual regret was excited, that so small a space could be assigned to each one; though it would have been to them delightful to think of being lost amidst the blaze of numerous "burning and shining lights."

ABRAHAM REES, D.D. F.R.S. F.L.S

We should have preferred commencing with a Presbyterian who adhered to the ancient faith of that

body, but these are so rare, that we now present a biographical notice of an eminent man who belonged to that class which have retained the name after they have abandoned the creed of the Presbyterians.

Abraham Rees was the son of the Rev. Lewis Rees, a dissenting minister of Wales, who contributed, during an almost unexampled length of active life, to the prosperity of the Nonconformist churches in the principality. The great grandfather of Dr. Rees was a Welch clergyman; and his ancestor, by the mother's side, was the celebrated Penry, who was a martyr to Nonconformity, under Queen Elizabeth. Abraham Rees, having been well educated in a grammar school, entered on his studies for the ministry in the academy over which Drs. Jennings and Savage presided. His father had dedicated him to the ministry from his birth, with more zeal than wisdom; for it does not appear that the personal piety of the youth was well ascertained, to say nothing of inquiring whether it was the will of God to call him into the ministry.

He was, however, distinguished for success in study; and he became so eminent in mathematics, that a vacancy occurring in that department, during his academical course, he was chosen to succeed the tutor. In this office he gave so much satisfaction, that he was appointed resident tutor, which situation he filled, for twenty-three years. On his resignation, the institution was, to his great regret, dissolved. He afterwards officiated as an occasional preacher, till he was chosen, in 1768, to succeed Mr. Read, as pastor of the congregation in St. Thomas's, Southwark. The congregation is said to have flourished under his care, during

fifteen years, at the end of which he quitted it to take charge of another in the Old Jewry, formerly under the care of Dr. Chandler, whose memoir is given in the third period of the History of Dissenters.* The flock, which had much declined, Dr. Rees was the means of reviving; for he was in high repute for learning and talents, was amiable in disposition, and highly respectable in character. To this people he preached, from 1783 to the time of his death, though the place of worship in the Old Jewry, was exchanged for a new one in Jewin-street. During several years he was engaged with Mr. Hugh Worthington, in an evening lecture at Salters' Hall. These were the two most celebrated men of the school which had abandoned orthodoxy, and advanced towards Socinianism; but though they may both have been pronounced Socinians, they were rather Arians, or men of doubtful creed. Their distinguished abilities, however, attracted attention, and sustained the falling cause of heterodoxy, by learning and energy, if not by theology. When his associates made a bold effort to regain, by science and literature, what they had lost by error, Abraham Rees was made Professor of Hebrew and Mathematics, in the New College at Hackney. This appointment, as well as some others in that institution, was judicious; and the tutors might have said, if our cause could have been revived, it would have been by us; but the splendid attempt proved abortive, while new academical institutions, though less pretending, were rising among evangelical

* Vol. ii. p. 590. Second Edition.

Dissenters, and advancing to extensive usefulness and enduring strength.

But Abraham Rees, who was obliged to relinquish the effort to give celebrity to a lifeless divinity, gained great distinction for himself in the department of secular learning. In 1781, appeared the first number of Rees' Edition of Chambers' Cyclopædia, which was, in 1784, completed in four volumes. The success of this undertaking encouraged him to attempt a more gigantic work; and the first volume of Rees' Cyclopædia, having appeared, it was completed, in 1802, in forty-five quarto volumes. Never before had an individual achieved such a task; for other works of that title had been the result of the united labour of many; and though Abraham Rees had able assistance, it was to so small an extent, that his work stands as a noble monument of his own industry and power. It was natura that such a man should be crowned with academic honours. At the recommendation of Dr. Robertson, the historian, the degree of D.D. was conferred on him by the University of Edinburgh, and he was made a fellow both of the Royal and Linnæan Societies.

While rising into literary fame, Dr. Rees published a great number of single sermons, preached on particular occasions, which show his good sense, superior learning, and chaste composition; but the chief charm of a sermon—direct and powerful tendency to promote the salvation of men—was precluded by his creed, or rather by his want of a creed; for his heresy was rather negative than positive. In the two volumes of sermons which he published, he appears, by no means,

the advocate for all the errors of those with whom he chiefly associated ; for he contends against materialism, and what is called the soul-sleeping hypothesis ; and makes a nearer approach to evangelical sentiments, than those who knew him, only by his connections, would have expected. He used to say, that while he thought for himself, he agreed most, not with Priestly, but with Price, to whom, indeed, he bore, in many points, a strong resemblance.

With great dignity of deportment, and suavity of manners, he combined a steady and laborious zeal in behalf of the liberties of mankind, and the temporal interests of his brethren. He was, for many years, a distributor of the Regium Donum, or Parliamentary Grant ; and was long a chief manager of the Presbyterian fund, of which he was, for almost half a century, the secretary. In the Widows' fund, he took a lively interest ; and in all these benevolent schemes, he was the advocate of the needy, and especially of those who belonged to his native country, Wales. Many in that region of poverty and simple manners, revere the memory of the man who pleaded with good effect their cause, and proved himself a brother born for adversities. After preserving, to a great age, the vigour, both of his body and mind, and standing as an interesting monument of a former generation, he was called, in his eightieth year, to appear again at Court, where he had often addressed the throne ; for, on the accession of George the Fourth, he was able to say, that he had appeared, on a similar occasion, to address that prince's father, who had reigned sixty years. The accomplished monarch, who was then succeeding to the

throne, addressed Dr. Rees as the author of the celebrated "Cyclopædia," and evinced great interest in one who might be pronounced the father of the literary and scientific men of our nation. Not long after this, he was removed, by a short illness, from his earthly labours and honours. He died January 9, 1825, in the eighty-second year of his age. At his own request, his funeral sermon was preached by Dr. Thomas Rees, who was not, as might be supposed, his relative; but the deceased expressed his confidence that the preacher, though differing in sentiments, would do justice to the memory of him who requested of him this last act of friendship.

Dr. Abraham Rees attracted attention even from strangers, by a remarkably fine person, a venerable and intelligent countenance, and dignified neatness of dress and manner. His philosophical calmness and amenity were enlivened by a slight play of intellectual pleasantry; and while his independence of mind was maintained with great firmness, he displayed a delicate attention to the rights of others. When some of those who may be deemed his own party, betrayed an inclination to succumb to Lord Sidmouth's scheme for limiting to educated men the right of preaching, Dr. Rees declared, that if the rudest labourers chose to preach, their right should not be disputed. This just and liberal sentiment was the more noble and effective, because it came from the man whose literary celebrity raised him above the suspicion of ignorant contempt for learning; while his years gave to his words the weight due to the oracle of the ancients.

In him the theologian was spoiled by the mathema-

tician. He seems never to have lost all reverence for his father's orthodoxy; but the love of science and literature made him lean towards that class of Dissenters over whom the philosophical Priestly acquired an unhappy ascendancy. With a mind too independent, however, to bow to any other, he resisted the tendency to which almost all the men of that school yielded; and Dr. Abraham Rees stood almost alone, as Price, his favourite thinker, had done, at the halfway house between Geneva and Racovia. His ministry, therefore, was about equally devoid of the views of Socinianism and the balm of the Gospel. His sermons were intellectual, but not evangelical, aiming at that morality which can be inspired only by true piety; and while they are calculated to set the mind a thinking, they never make the heart throb with the pangs of repentance, or the joys of faith. Apart from his theology, or neology, he was such a man as every communion would be glad to call its own.

If the Socinians had any right to claim him, they might justly place him on the summit of their Parnassus, and hail him as their great Apollo. But he belongs to that very small class who departed from the evangelical creed, without becoming decidedly hostile to it; and having lost the power to do good in the pulpit, never made it their ambition to do mischief. No one can take up the great work of Dr. Rees, without being inspired with respect for his talents, esteem for his character, and admiration for his gigantic labours. His name will go down to posterity as one who conferred literary honour on the dissenting body, whose cause he espoused.

THOMAS BELSHAM.

This successor to Dr. Priestly was born at Bedford, April 15, 1750. His father, James Belsham, who was minister at Newport Pagnel, had, while residing at Bedford, married a daughter of Sir Francis Wingate, and a descendant of the first Earl of Anglesea. Thomas Belsham was, when young, placed under the tuition of Dr. Aikin, at Kibworth, and afterwards under Mr. French, at Ware, from whom he passed, in 1767, into the seminary for the ministry at Daventry, where Dr. Ashworth had succeeded to the office which Doddridge once held. Here young Belsham seems to have begun to think seriously of that religion which he was preparing to teach; and all his future aberrations may be traced to the fatal error of admitting unregenerated men to study for the ministry. He kept a Diary, which shows, at once, his seriousness and his ignorance of the way of salvation. By reading Doddridge's Rise and Progress of Religion, he was induced to enter into the covenant there recommended; but his own account of the transaction, shows that it was slavish and joyless, as such a transaction must be, when it is made a substitute for the faith which receives righteousness and peace through Christ alone. With this manufactured religion, he came to the Lord's table, for the first time, while a student for the ministry. Who can wonder that a seminary, conducted on such principles, furnished the churches with Socinian pastors? A ministry that begins at the wrong end is likely to be all wrong.

In the same spirit of seriousness and ignorance,

Mr. Belsham dedicated himself to the ministry, and preached his first sermon, in the pulpit of Mr. Bull, at Newport Pagnel. The classical tutor at Daventry having resigned, this student was chosen to succeed him, and spent the fifth and last year of his academic course in the double capacity of student and tutor. He was afterwards appointed to teach mathematics, logic, and metaphysics. In the year 1773, he agreed, with some other preachers, to use none but scriptural doxologies, the first intimation of his change of creed. By a remarkable coincidence we find, in his Diary, at this time, the following record: "Instead of advancing in religion, I wish to God I knew whether there be any real religion at all." O that he had abandoned all thoughts of the ministry till he had settled this, which was surely the previous question!

Dr. Ashworth dying, in 1775, Mr. Robins succeeded him, and Mr. Belsham retained his office till 1778, when he removed to Worcester, where he entered on his pastoral charge, by preaching a sermon on "Coming to them in the fulness of the blessing of Christ." On this sermon he afterwards commented in a strain of censure, which he closed, by saying, "Being blind, I now see." The former blindness was too true, but it was exchanged only for deeper night. At Worcester he seems to have adopted Dr. Priestly's system of philosophical necessity; but he became rather popular with a certain class, for he set up an evening lecture, which it was fashionable with the inhabitants of the town to attend, during the winter; though, in summer, his hearers found greater attractions elsewhere. This,

however, is too common to be regarded as any proof of the inefficiency of heterodoxy.

He was, in 1781, invited by Coward's trustees, to succeed Mr. Robins in the superintendence of the academy, to which was added, the care of the congregation. The number of students was small, and they were not all intended for the ministry. They seem to have been left to walk in their own ways; but Mr. Belsham, who censured the laxity of his predecessors, restored discipline and order. Two years after, we find him debating about quitting the orthodox camp; and in the next two years he had made such progress in that direction, as to propose to a friend the questions, "Whether it is right for a minister, who is not a Trinitarian, to continue with a flock, the majority of whom are, and who invited him, supposing that he was? and whether such a person should continue at the head of an academy to which the dissenting congregation look for supplies?" Mr. Belsham was, at this time, an Arian; but he retained his post, for two years longer. What a melancholy display is here afforded, not only of Mr. Belsham's advance in error, but also of the loose manner in which others held the truth!

The effects of heterodoxy began to appear; for that Spirit who teaches how to pray, being denied and gone, the students requested to be allowed to write their prayers, which each one offered, in his turn, in family worship. This *privilege* the trustees refused to concede, as inconsistent with the intentions of Mr. Coward, the founder. They had not, then, quite forgotten their

founder. In the year 1766, Mr. Belsham avowed his adoption of Socinian sentiments; and, like an honest man, resigned his offices in the congregation and the academy. He might have taken refuge in the vagueness of Mr. Coward's trust deed for the academy; but much to Mr. Belsham's honour, he interpreted the words according to Mr. Coward's well-known sentiments, and scorned a disingenuous subterfuge. It has been asserted, that the congregation would have retained him as their pastor, after they knew his sentiments; but it is probable that this was true, only of that part on which he had successfully operated, while his errors were rather suspected than known. If it were true of the rest, their orthodoxy was a mere theory. Here, also, Mr. Belsham deserves credit for being too honourable to profit by the injury he had done to a flock which he found professedly evangelical.

Two honest men, Priestly and Belsham, show what a host of others might have done for the honour of morality, even when they quitted, what appears to us, the higher walks of evangelical piety; for had many of the Socinian ministers been as moral, much of the property that is now perverted, would be answering the design of the donors.

Mr. Belsham was almost immediately appointed tutor of the new college at Hackney; but he soon foresaw the ruin of the institution, which as speedily followed. But when Dr. Priestly was driven to America, by the disgraceful riots at Birmingham, Mr. Belsham was chosen to succeed him in the congregation at Hackney, of which he was, after a time, elected

the sole preacher. He wrote an answer to Mr. Wilberforce's Practical View of Christianity; and, by a second stroke of his pen, instructs us, for he now recorded in his Diary, a struggle with a tendency to scepticism, though, on the whole, the evidences of Christianity preponderate. Mr. Wilberforce had denounced Socinianism as the half-way house to Deism; and an infidel, Dr. Priestly pronounced not far from himself; and Mr. Belsham saw the balance trembling, when Christianity and scepticism were weighed.

In the year 1805, Mr. Belsham resigned his charge at Hackney, to accept an invitation to preach in Essex Street, London, the site of the cathedral to which the elite and the titled, among those who are termed Unitarians, resort. He now became the principal editor of what was called, "The Improved Version of the New Testament," and was zealous in its defence. He published, in 1811, his "Calm Inquiry into the Scripture Doctrine of the Person of Christ." A Translation and Exposition of the Epistles of St. Paul were his last works. After suffering from an accident, he died at Hampstead, Nov. 11, 1829, in the eightieth year of his age.

This leading man, in that class of Dissenters who *sometimes* call themselves Presbyterians, and sometimes Unitarians, is given as a type of that body, in this period of the History of Dissenters, as Dr. Priestly was exhibited in that which preceded. The readers of Mr. Belsham's biography will probably be surprised to find so much of a devotional character; but, on a closer inspection, they will observe, that this is the result of his former sentiments; and as these are

exchanged for the faith, or rather the unbelief of his latter days, the devotion tapers off to nothing. But even his early religion was essentially defective; for, to exhibit him as a trophy of the triumph of Socinianism over Calvinism, betrays inconsideration or ignorance. He never was a Calvinist. He went to the seminary for the ministry without religion. Common sense taught him that a minister ought to have personal piety; and his honesty made him confess he had it not. The Assembly's Catechism, and Doddridge's Rise and Progress of Religion, he had been taught to consider as the standards of doctrine and devotion; but his attempt to bring himself up to this mark was a failure. He seems never to have been even theoretically sensible of his fallen state, of his need of regeneration by the Holy Spirit, or of justification by faith in Christ. The formal religion that he substituted, being joyless and unblessed, left him exposed to the stings of his professed creed, but destitute of its balm. To such a man, Socinianism appeared a refuge that promised deliverance from pains and fears; while, to real believers in those doctrines, which he is supposed to have renounced, infidelity, under every form, appears a murderer that inflicts death on their dearest hopes and purest joys. Mr. Belsham, therefore, during the course of his transition, recurs again and again to the theme, seeking closer and still closer approximation to Dr. Priestly, like the moth that contracts its fatal circles till it falls into the flame. Every one that watches the process, as recorded in Mr. Belsham's life, must see that he felt as one that had nothing to lose. To him, therefore, Socinianism appeared great

gain. For it will always be a relief to pass from a cold attempt to possess what we do not love, to a hearty declaration of attachment to what better suits our taste.

While we drop a tear over him, and severely censure many of his first associates for their spurious candour, and their real unfaithfulness to him and to truth, we honour his memory for the frank avowal he made of his change, and the voluntary relinquishment of posts which he was never qualified to fill. In his best days, we can scarcely discover even a passing thought of the great end of the ministry, the calling of the chosen, and their regeneration and justification, by "the Gospel preached, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." If such ministers cannot be said to do more good, they certainly do less harm, when they avow themselves Socinians, than when they fancy themselves orthodox. The praise bestowed on the frank avowal of his change, is a satire, if not on human nature, at least, on the party to which he became a proselyte; for what honourable mind ever thought it a wondrous stretch of honesty, frankly to declare itself a convert to an opposite creed? Mr. Belsham's relinquishment of his living at Daventry was no martyrdom; for that which was never a couch of ease, must, after his Socinianism was avowed, have become a bed of thorns. But as the highest compliment to the integrity which refused to employ the bequests of Calvinists for the propagation of Socinianism, has been paid by those who have shown that it is too lofty for them to imitate, it is gratifying to observe, that he who rewarded Nebuchadnezzar for his service

against Tyre, by the conquest of Egypt, gave Mr. Belsham something better for this world, than that which he had relinquished. Why has not this encouraging example produced its appropriate effects?

The true character of Mr. Belsham's unhappy conversion was displayed in the prominence he assumed among his new friends. Though never distinguished by any thing that could be called genius or eloquence, he exhibited, in behalf of the negation of Socinianism, a zeal which was in perfect contrast with his apathy towards the positive truths he once professed. To gain the souls of the poor to Christ, had for him no excitement, compared with the glory of being at the head of a party in Essex Street, where, amidst a line of carriages, he might see the coronet of the Duke of Grafton. Such are the consequences of an unregenerate ministry. Happily, Dissenters have taken the warning, and are entitled to hope for exemption from many of the pains which such men as Belsham have inflicted.

As Mr. Belsham's administration was not the last instance of the misapplication of Coward's funds, it was natural that a respectable minister of the Establishment should take occasion from thence to plead in favour of subscription to articles, in order to preserve the universities from the inroads of error.* But it should be observed, that Mr. Belsham became a Socinian, after he was a tutor; and had he previously subscribed to a creed, it would still have depended on his honesty whether he would quit the

* The Dean of Peterborough's Review of the Principal Dissenting Colleges in England.

station or not. Besides, men interpret the same words very differently; and they who can think they believe the Bible, while they are Socinians, can persuade themselves that they honestly subscribe to scriptural articles, while holding, what to others appear, directly opposite sentiments. Other dissenting colleges have, without requiring subscription, continued orthodox; though many institutions that are fenced round with creeds and declarations, have, in the most unblushing manner, been perverted from their manifest design. The true source of the evil lies in admitting to seminaries for the ministry, men who give no evidence, and even make no profession, of having so "believed on the Son of God, as to have passed from death to life." Previously to this, the best creed is not really understood, and there is no security that it may not be exchanged for the worst.

It is, however, consolatory to know, that the perversion of Mr. Coward's Trust is now remedied, and that there is good, if not the best, evidence, that it will not be repeated. That Unitarians should be at liberty to educate ministers for their congregations, by expending their own funds, is manifestly just; but it is high time that they should cease to dishonour their own creed, by perverting the liberality of the orthodox to purposes which their souls would have abhorred.

ALEXANDER WAUGH, D.D.

This most estimable divine is introduced here as a specimen of the orthodox Presbyterians; for, though he was not, strictly speaking, an English Dissenter, as

he belonged to the Scotch Secession, he was a Dissenter in his own country; and as he was one of the Presbyterian body in London, he may fairly be adduced to show that the whole of that denomination did not deny its ancient faith.

Alexander Waugh was born, on the 16th of August, 1754, at East Gordon, in Berwickshire, of pious parents, who belonged to the class of small farmers. His father was induced, by his love of the truth, to join the first ministers who formed a secession from the Church of Scotland, in order to resist the effects of lay patronage, which was, at that time, forced upon the people. Much of the subsequent excellence of the subject of this memoir, may be clearly traced to the primitive piety, not only of his father, but of his mother too, who used to conduct the worship of the family in the absence of her husband. Alexander, the youngest of their children, was educated at the school of his native parish, till nearly twelve years of age, and then placed, for five years, at Earlstown, a neighbouring seminary, celebrated for its success in imparting the knowledge of Latin and Greek. Here, in the Arcadia of Scotland, he imbibed that poetic love for natural scenery, which gave a strong and beautiful tinge to his future eloquence. He was marked for his early rambles; and when asked, at breakfast time, where he had been, he replied, "I have been seeing Foxy, and hearing the linnets." He was even then the leader of a prayer meeting, under the shade of an elder tree, where he poured out such supplications, as, being overheard by his parents, induced them to consecrate him to the ministry. He

was admitted to the communion of the Secession church, at Stitchell, when he was but sixteen.

As the Scotch universities, by their liberality, put to shame the exclusive spirit of Cambridge, and especially of Oxford, Mr. Waugh prepared for the dissenting ministry in Scotland, by spending four years at the university, before he entered on his theological studies. He distinguished himself most in Latin, and least in Hebrew, though he had the advantage of such a professor as Dr. James Robertson. He was admitted as a student of divinity, in August, 1774, under the celebrated John Brown, of Haddington, author of the Annotations on the Bible. This good man, at first, feared that Mr. Waugh had been "spoiled by philosophy and vain deceit," under Dr. Ferguson, Professor of Moral Philosophy, at Edinburgh; but salutary warnings produced, on the mind of the pupil, the happy effect designed by the pious tutor. In 1777, Alexander Waugh attended, for one session, the lectures of Dr. Beattie, and Dr. Campbell, at Marishal College, Aberdeen. He was licensed to preach, by the Presbytery, in June, 1779; and two months after, was sent to supply the place of the deceased minister, Mr. Archibald Hall, in the Secession congregation, at Wells Street, Oxford Street, London. Though this society was desirous of obtaining his permanent services, as other congregations had expressed the same wish, he was first settled at Newton, near his paternal abode, but he removed to London, in June, 1782.

Here he laboured with great diligence, till called to his eternal rest, lecturing or expounding every Sab-

bath morning, and preaching, in the afternoon and evening. He confined himself, at first, to his own charge, and spent much time in retirement and study, passing through that second education, without which the first is little better than nugatory. He was married, on the 10th of August, 1806, in Scotland, to Miss Mary Neill, whose brother, Mr. Neill, of Surrey Street, London, proved an affectionate and generous friend to the young couple. Having been, sometime after, overtaken by a storm at sea, on his return from Scotland, when he reached the shore, he went into the churchyard, and kneeling behind a tomb-stone, poured out his thanks to God. Then observing, on a newly-erected tomb, the inscription, "He died in Jesus," he found out the house where the family resided, and was, by their kindness and hospitality, revived, after extreme exhaustion, and enabled to pursue his journey to London. This incident, which beautifully exhibits the affinity of all Christians to each other, equally displays the combination of the romantic with the devotional, which threw an inexpressible charm over Mr. Waugh's character.

In the year 1806, he was detained from the pulpit by illness so severe and protracted, that it created great alarm among his friends; but he was restored to them, who so much valued his labours that they afterwards rebuilt their chapel, by an exertion, which, considering their means, was highly creditable to their liberality. He received, in 1815, the degree of doctor of divinity from Marishal College, Aberdeen. But the most important events of his public life were those which

brought him into connexion with the great benevolent institutions of his day. With an avowed ardour of attachment to his own communion, he had always combined the most generous catholicism, which early introduced him to affectionate intercourse with Mr. Newton, the venerable rector of St. Mary Woolnoth; and when the Evangelical Magazine was projected, he joined the Independents, who were its principal patrons. In the distribution of the profits of that work to the widows of ministers, he took the Scotch widows under his especial care, always pleading their cause as a friend and father, with an ardour that was delightfully amusing. When the Missionary Society was formed, in 1795, he was one of its founders, and entered into its labours with all the force of his chivalrous and benevolent soul. He always spoke of himself as a debtor to this society, for the vast sphere of usefulness it opened to his exertions; for the many valuable friendships of great and good men to which it admitted him; and for the high respect he enjoyed from the religious public, which, with his characteristic modesty, he was ever ready to acknowledge was far above his deserts. Prior to the rise of the society, he was little known beyond the circle of his own religious connexions; and, like many other good men, might have lived and died without attracting public notice, had he not come into contact with an object peculiarly calculated to excite to the utmost powers of exertion, the energies of a mind fitted for noble deeds. He preached, at the second annual meeting of the Missionary Society, a sermon admirably calculated to

promote, among the different denominations associated for the great work, the harmony essential to their success.

As the society had originally detremined to send the Gospel, not only to the heathen, but also to other unenlightened nations, France attracted its attention, during the short peace of Amiens, and Mr. Waugh accompanied Messrs. Hardcastle, Wilks, and Bogue, on a visit to that country, in the autumn of 1802. Of this tour he gave his friends a very lively description, which proved how ardently he entered into the benevolent project of reviving a sense of religion in the most important part of the European continent. He went, in the summer of 1812, to Ireland, on a missionary tour, in company with Dr. Jack, of Manchester. During this journey, he vanquished the prejudices of many, and greatly promoted the interests of the missionary cause. It was natural that he should visit his native country, on the same errand, on which occasion he observed, "Since I came to the south of Scotland, I have felt as a man walking among the tombs. What a blank does every village present to my view! I myself must soon add to the number of those that are missing." He brought home to the treasury of the Missionary Society upwards of fourteen hundred pounds, collected chiefly from the Secession churches. He made, in 1819, his second and last visit to the land of his fathers; for though he projected another journey, an accident, which he met with, by the fall of a scaffold, in laying the foundation of an Orphan House, at Clapham, was his warning to prepare for the end of his race.

Having presided, for twenty-eight years, as chairman of the Committee of Examination of the Missionary Society, in the most admirable spirit, he was revered and loved as the parent of the missionaries who came before them for acceptance. To the British and Foreign Bible Society, he was, from its commencement, a devoted friend. The Religious Tract and Hibernian Societies, also, found in him an eloquent advocate, as did the Scottish Hospital, and the Society for Propagating the Gospel in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

These various labours had been, for some time, pursued under the pressure of illness; and in November, 1827, he caught a severe cold; but he went and preached at Albion Chapel, on a sacramental occasion, upon the words, "Christ died for us." He exclaimed, with astonishing effect, "Lay your hand on this, my brother, 'Christ died for us!' Show it as your answer to all the accusations of conscience; present it to the king of terrors as your security from his sting, and hold it up at the bar of judgment as your plea for the enjoyment of life everlasting." On reaching home, he said to his wife, "I am much better, my dear; preaching is the best cure for a cold." That evening he indulged all the kindness of his heart in his intercourse with his friends; and the next morning, would have gone, contrary to the advice of his friends, to see one under distress of mind; but while the affair was under debate, he was seized by the symptoms of approaching dissolution. On being assisted to bed, he held out his hand to his daughter, and said, "Let me talk to you, my lamb; for I am very ill, and shall

never get up any more." She begged him to try to sleep, saying, he would then be better, and work very hard yet for his Master. He replied, "No, no, my child, my work is done. Let me talk to you, while I can. I have very little time." When his family assembled round him, he poured out the prayers of a dying patriarch for the interests of all whom he was about to leave. When reminded that he was going to his reward, he exclaimed, "Reward! no, no; I am going to receive mercy, mercy." Being asked, if he knew he was dying, he answered, "Yes, and my mind is as much composed, at this moment, as any man's in London." After commending his partner in life to her children's care, and them to each other's love, he fell asleep in Jesus, December 14, 1827, in the seventy-fourth year of his age.

The most marked honour was paid to his memory in death; and he, who had never concealed his attachment to his own denomination, was bewailed by men of other communions, as if he had been removed from their own. His person was tall and large, venerable in appearance, and singularly interesting, by the fire of an eye that beamed intelligence and love. He was eminently national in his tastes and attachments; but his Scotch accent, which he cherished rather than concealed, was rendered intelligible to all by the tones of a heart which uttered all the Christian philanthropist. In prayer, as well as in preaching, his bursts of eloquence were accompanied with figures that were not only romantic, but youthful, to a degree that would have exposed any other man to the suspicion of puerile display; but in him they were welcomed as the genuine

utterance of a soul in which imagination was the handmaid of piety, zeal, and love. After the specimens we have given of the lifeless and erroneous Presbyterianism of England, it is consoling to be able to produce one, though from another country, which exhibits the ancient spirit that still pervades a communion which formerly overspread our land.

THE REV. THOMAS TOLLER OF KETTERING.

Thomas Northcote Toller was the son of an attorney at South Petherton, in Somersetshire, who had married Miss Northcote of the same town. The parents were as eminent for piety as their son afterwards became for ministerial ability; for their house was celebrated for the strictness and fervour with which family worship was maintained, amidst the urgent claims of a large professional practice. The subject of this biographical sketch was born at Petherton, in 1756; a period in which the most pious among the Dissenters had not been awaked to the necessity of decided separation from the errors which were creeping in among them. Thomas Toller, like many other eminent men, ascribed his first religious impressions to his mother's faithful care, which was so early successful, that he was sent, at the age of fifteen, to study for the ministry, at Daventry, in that day the most distinguished seat of learning among the Dissenters. The reputation which the institution had acquired from the ability and piety of Dr. Doddridge, was, at that time, fully sustained by Dr. Ashworth, who was first assisted, and then succeeded by Mr. Robins, whom Mr. Toller used always to pronounce the wisest and

best man he ever knew. The concurrent testimony of other competent judges excites regret that one so distinguished was early compelled, by ill health, to retire from the charge of the seminary into private life; and that he has left behind him none of those finished productions, which excited the admiration of his most able contemporaries, of whom several ascribed to him their first taste for the sublime and beautiful in composition.

The institution afterwards fell into inferior hands; and was, while Mr. Toller pursued his studies, in a state extremely unfavourable to his best interests, as a Christian and a minister. Dr. Priestly, indeed, says, that while he was a student there, the best opportunities were afforded for coming to the knowledge of truth; for tutors and students were equally divided between orthodoxy and heterodoxy; but, though Mr. Toller never adopted the Arian, or Socinian theology, his mind was so far warped, that the early part of his ministry was rendered comparatively inefficient, by the loose and vague manner in which he stated the doctrines of the Gospel. In the school of affliction, he afterwards learned a better lesson; but, to the last, the influence of Daventry diminished the effect of his fine powers. The mixture of orthodox and heterodox students, and of men destined to civil life, with those who were studying for the ministry, and the total absence of all examination into their personal piety, deprived Mr. Toller of the advantages which young men should enjoy from Christian fellowship with their compeers, while preparing to preach the Gospel of Christ.

After studying four years, Mr. Toller was sent to preach to a vacant congregation at Kettering, where Mr. Boyce had formerly enjoyed the reward of his able and faithful labours, in a flourishing and affectionate charge. But he had been succeeded by a Mr. Fuller, who, appearing to disadvantge after such a predecessor, had been compelled, within two years, to resign, leaving the congregation injured and divided. Mr. Toller, therefore, had little hope of being more than tolerated in his first efforts here; but, to his surprise, he was invited, with great unanimity, to take the pastoral charge. He saw the hand of God in it, and accepted the call, not without that anxious fear which was a presage of his final success. He was ordained in May, 1778; and through life, he blessed God for placing him, when young, among a people whose judgment and piety were as great a blessing to him at first, as his abilities and fidelity were to them at last. For as the church is the conservative and immortal body, while ministers change and die, the character of a people is of the highest importance to that young man who is entering into the labours of those who have finished their work, and gone to their rest. Mr. Toller repaired, at Kettering, the injuries he had received at Daventry.

He devoted himself, with great decision of character, and affection of heart, to a charge which became to him every day more dear. He was seldom absent from his own pulpit; for the distracting avocations, which now so frequently interfere with pastoral watchfulness, were then, in a great measure, unknown. The danger of satiety, from perpetually hearing the same man, his

flock happily escaped ; for he gave himself to reading, as the apostle commands the young minister to do ; and Mr. Toller always condemned the folly of those preachers, who merely prepare for each service as it returns, which is sure to create a wearisome sameness, both of thought and diction. With such diligence he watched for the improvement of his own mind, by its richness to furnish continual supplies of novel information and illustration, that one who knew him and the ministry well, affirmed "he was always listened to with the intense interest that a stranger would suppose was the effect of hearing him for the first or the last time. From the commencement of his residence at Kettering, the attachment of his flock went on still increasing till it arrived at a point beyond which it would have been idolatry." It will easily be perceived, that this could not have arisen solely from the mental wealth and power which he consecrated to their edification ; and all who knew him agree, that he excelled in the qualities and the conduct which win esteem, and fix the heart. There was in him a rare combination of all that force of intellect which instructs, and awes, and fascinates the mind, with that loveliness of spirit, and dignified benevolence of conduct which kindle the loftiest affections of the soul.

It was considered by contemporaries, that his personal and ministerial excellences were promoted by Mr. Fuller's settlement with the Baptist congregation at Kettering. Two such men were scarcely ever before found in one small country town, each at the head of a very different order of preachers ; and each sufficiently wise and good to exchange esteem without

rivalship. Mr. Fuller's *forte* was accurate distinction in doctrines, with an uncompromising defence of truth, the very qualities which Mr. Toller most needed; while he excelled in that amiable inclination to discover excellence amidst defects, and that power of giving to truth a charm that commends it to the heart, in which Mr. Fuller was most defective. Mr. Toller was the fairest specimen of a cultivated mind, devoted from childhood to religion and learning; while Mr. Fuller exhibited the noblest example of mental power, by force of religion, working its way out of ignorance and rudeness into theological eminence, and extensive usefulness. The Independent was formed to adorn the doctrines, which the Baptist was fitted to elicit and to prove; the former swaying the heart, the latter commanding the intellect; so that, if we could have had the excellences of both, without the faults of either, we should have seen a perfect exhibition of him who is presented to us under the opposite images, of the Lamb of God, and the Lion of the tribe of Judah."

Mr. Toller married, in 1793, a lady whose worth rendered her early removal, by a consumption, a severe trial to him. He was left with two children, one of whom now succeeds his father in the pastoral charge at Kettering. In 1803, he married again, and had a second family, who, with their mother, were left to bewail his loss. Having been invited, in 1799, to assist Mr. Taylor, at Carter Lane, London, with an offer of an income, for one service in the day, superior to that which he received at Kettering, he gave an immediate refusal; but, shortly after, the congregation at Clapham, joined with that in Carter Lane, each

requesting one sermon on the Lord's day; and both wishing to offer a handsome salary. The congregation at Kettering, therefore, alarmed at these efforts to deprive them of their pastor, addressed to him such assurances of their attachment as led him to declare, that he would not leave them. They, afterwards, gave substantial proofs how highly they appreciated both his own worth and the pecuniary sacrifices he had made for them, by raising an annuity, to which he at first objected, but which relieved his mind, when, affliction having shaken his frame, he expected to leave behind him a widow and family.

Mr. Hall, while at Cambridge, was invited to preach with him, at Thrapston, what is called a double lecture; at which, one preacher immediately follows another, in order to afford the congregation, which is collected from distant parts, an opportunity of hearing both, without being detained for a second service. The pastor from Cambridge, who was himself so distinguished in the pulpit, said, "Never shall I forget the pleasure and surprise with which I listened to Mr. Toller's expository discourse, on 1 Peter ii. 1—3. The richness, the unction, the simple majesty, which pervaded his address, produced an effect that I never felt before. It gave me a new view of the Christian ministry. But this was not to be compared with what I felt, a few days after, on hearing him preach, at an association of ministers, at Bedford, on 2 Peter i. 12—15. The effect of this discourse on the audience, was such as I never witnessed before, or since. It was, undoubtedly, very much aided by the peculiar circumstances of the preacher, who was judged to be

far advanced in a decline, and seemed to speak under a strong impression of its being the last time he should address his brethren. The aspect of the preacher, pale, emaciated, standing, apparently, on the verge of eternity, the simplicity and majesty of his sentiments, the sepulchral solemnity of a voice which seemed to issue from the shades, combined with the intrinsic dignity of the subject, perfectly quelled the audience with tenderness and terror, and produced such a scene of audible weeping, as was, perhaps, never surpassed. Every sublunary object vanished before 'the powers of the world to come.' It will always be considered, by those who witnessed it, as high a specimen as can easily be conceived of the power of a preacher over his audience; the habitual, or even frequent recurrence of which, would create an epoch in the religious history of the world." He was invited by Mr. Hall to Cambridge, where his health received a happy turn; and where his celebrity, as a preacher, was greatly increased.

The only object that drew out Mr. Toller from the strict routine of the preacher and pastor, was the British and Foreign Bible Society, of which the simple majesty of the design, and the unlimited catholicity of the principle, exactly suited his turn of mind, and waked up all the fires of his impassioned soul. He became, therefore, a secretary to one of its auxiliaries, and threw the whole force of his intellect and his heart into his office. At the first meeting, in Northampton, the Duke of Grafton was in the chair, and Mr. Toller took the bold and delicate step of departing from the usual plan of speaking to the audience, and addressed

himself solely to the chairman. With such effect he contrasted the position of a peer when in the senate, and when at the head of a bible society; that, while others were astonished and delighted, the Duke was melted into tears; and, acknowledging the magic power of the speaker, doubled his contribution to the society.

It is to be regretted that such a mind as Mr. Toller's should have been prevented from giving to missions the aid of his character and his eloquence, by the strange fancy, which was, however, at that time, too general, that the heathen could not be converted but by some new and miraculous dispensation of Providence. He was, indeed, shaken from that position by the force of delightful facts, which would never have been elicited but by a better faith. While others were labouring to produce the effects which slowly altered his sentiments, he was himself descending into the grave, where "no man can work."

Through life, subject to fits of depression, the frequent companion of continual mental efforts, he was, at last, overpowered by a very severe attack, which has been attributed to the sudden cessation of the profuse perspirations into which he used to be thrown, by preaching. He was now rendered incapable of performing his ministerial duties; and, by the overpowering sense of the holiness of God, was led to question the reality of his religion, and almost to despair of obtaining the divine favour. But the effect was salutary, for, to use his own words, he spent a whole year in weeping and prayer; and being, at length, restored to peace of mind, his ministry was

eminently improved. The vagueness of his views, or, at least, the indefiniteness of his statements of doctrine, disappeared, and he became as decidedly evangelical as he had always been serious, benevolent, eloquent, and impressive.

He began, however, to be apprehensive of an attack of palsy or apoplexy, on which he remarked, "though he did not fear suffering, or death; he shrunk, with alarm, from the prospect of being a mental wreck, thrown aside, useless to the church, and a burden to his friends." The attack of apoplexy justified his apprehensions, but was not followed by the consequences he most dreaded; for he was, after preaching on the Lord's day, found dead, on the 26th of February, 1820, in his sixty-fourth year.

He was an instructive specimen of a country pastor, formed in the worst days of Dissent, and emerging into the spirit of the best. He and Dr. Priestly came from the same school, and exhibited the two parties into which it was divided. The celebrated philosopher showed whither heterodoxy tends; and the pastor of Kettering warned the church of the entanglements which evangelical piety will experience from evil associations. The clearness, the richness, the evangelical unction of Mr. Toller's mature ministrations, might, by a happier education, have attended his earliest efforts, and blessed all his days. A great part of his life was spent in working out the evil leaven received at Daventry, where his better sentiments were perplexed and enfeebled, without being abandoned.

His pre-eminence, as a preacher, was not merely a

phenomenon, but an enigma not easily solved. From notes in short hand, he read his sermons, a practice odious to evangelical Dissenters, by which the heterodox students from Daventry almost invariably dispersed their audiences; while Mr. Toller contrived to give, with the accuracy of reading, the freedom, and force, and pathos, of extemporary preaching. It has been said, that this arose, in some degree, from a peculiarity in his vision, which enabled him, at once, to glance at his manuscript and yet appear to be looking at his audience; and it is remarkable, that there have been numerous instances of eloquent speakers, such as Whitfield, who had a cast in the eye. But as Mr. Toller's written compositions fall far short of accounting for his sway over the minds of his hearers, we are led to conjecture that we have in print little more than the skeletons, which he clothed with forms of beauty, and inspired with vital warmth and energy by the promptings of his heart, at the moment of delivery. As this, however, does not accord with the general testimony of his living auditors, we are left to conclude that a modern Æschines might have said, on reading Toller's sermons, as the ancient, on reading Demosthenes' orations, "If you admire them from my lips, what would you have said, if you had heard the thunderer himself?" That Mr. Toller's heart gave a magic force to his voice, we can easily believe, when we are told that, after melting his audience into tears, being asked by one of them, how he could go on uninterrupted by such emotions, he replied, "Ah! I had my weeping time, yesterday." His style, therefore, betrays no labour, but having all the artless freshness of first

thoughts, never interposes a necessity for such mental efforts as interfere with the affections. His figures are those of passion, rather than of fancy; and his illustrations are drawn from nature, the book that lies open to all. This accounts for the entreaties of the poor, that they might not be deprived of the instructions of him whom the rich and the cultivated were anxious to obtain; and is itself accounted for, by his habit of studying his sermons in the open field, amidst that school of eloquence, the works of God.

There was, indeed, wherever he preached, but one voice expressive of unmingled, exalted delight. After hearing him, on one occasion, Mr. Hall was said to have been so wrapped in admiration, that he could think or speak of nothing else; and he used to say, there was but one reason why any other man besides Mr. Toller should preach, and that was, because all the world could not hear Mr. Toller. It will, in the estimation of the most intelligent Christian, be honourable to Mr. Toller's character, that he made preaching, in which he so much excelled, subordinate to the exposition of the Scriptures. In this engagement he abounded, giving to it one service on the Lord's day, and going through a large portion both of the Old Testament and the New, to which his felicitous method of illustration gave the finest effect. Some of his most splendid and affecting discourses, delivered at distant places, on public occasions, were, indeed, specimens of the happy combination of the peculiarities of preaching, with those of exposition. Let young ministers, who have been favoured with exemption from his early disadvantages, learn by his example, what may

be done by the heart of a preacher exclusively devoted to the improvement of his hearers; and how superior is the effect of a simple style and natural imagery, to all the laboured efforts of a gorgeous and affected declamation.

THE REV. WILLIAM ROBY, OF MANCHESTER.

William Roby was born, March 23, 1766, at Haigh, near Wigan, in Lancashire, of parents who were firmly attached to the national church. His father was a respectable schoolmaster, who gave his son a more careful education, in consequence of having destined him to the clerical profession. But neither the parent nor the child had any just idea of the ministry; for they were utterly ignorant of the Gospel. Lancashire, which abounds in Roman Catholics, was, at that time, deplorably destitute of Protestants acquainted with the principles of the Reformation. In the Establishment, an evangelical minister could scarcely be found; and, among the Dissenters, Socinianism had desolated the churches founded by the Puritans and Nonconformists. There were, however, several Independent ministers preaching the Gospel in that county, and a few Calvinistic Methodists, of the connection of Lady Huntingdon. The venerable Mr. Scott had sent forth some faithful men from his seminary at Heckmondwike, in the West Riding of Yorkshire; and Lady Huntingdon's College, at Trevecca, had done much to add to the labourers in the Gospel.

Mr. Johnson, who had come forth from the latter school, was living at Wigan, when Mr. Roby was directed by Providence to listen to his ministry. But

the instructions and impressions that imparted to him the Christian character, made him shrink from his original purpose of becoming a minister, for which he now saw himself unfit. He, therefore, accepted an appointment as classical master of the endowed school at Bretherton. There his increasing seriousness, and personal devotion, led to enlarged acquaintance with the doctrines of Scripture, and kindled a benevolent zeal to impart to those around him the principles of which he saw them alarmingly destitute. Discovering that the trust deed of the school required the master to give his pupils religious instruction on the Lord's Day, he deemed it his duty to comply; and his compassion for the parents induced him to invite them also to attend. As he added to the routine of catechizing the children, such extemporaneous addresses as were suited to persons of riper age, this soon gave offence and alarm to the clergyman of the parish, who first remonstrated, and, when this did not avail, threatened to withdraw the children from the school. As Mr. Roby's firmness was not to be shaken by threats, they were put in execution, and he was compelled to resign the situation. What will they have to answer for who take away the key of knowledge, not entering themselves, and hindering those who would? Conduct so unworthy of a Christian minister towards one who was sincerely attached to the Church of England did not shake that attachment; but as Mr. Roby could find none in his own communion with whom he could hold Christian fellowship, he stepped aside to those, who, without professing the principles, adopted many of the practices of the Dis-

senters. He went, probably at the recommendation of Mr. Johnson, to Lady Huntingdon's College at Trevecca, still intending to adhere to the Establishment, and to seek orders in it, on the completion of his academic course, which was not contrary, either to the principles or practice, of that institution. But, with change of scene he experienced also a modification of his views; for he was now brought into association with some who adopted dissenting principles. He was, therefore, induced, after two months, to go forth to preach. It may naturally be asked, what could he have learned in that time? But as the students were admitted at Trevecca, on a profession of regeneration, all were deemed qualified to preach who could tell fluently what they had known and felt; and Mr. Roby's previous education and employment soon marked him out as possessing that qualification.

He commenced his ministerial labours at Malvern, and preached, for some time, in the city of Worcester, where Lady Huntingdon had erected one of her chapels. He had not been thus employed, more than five or six years, when he was called to assist Mr. Johnson, his first spiritual instructor, who was preaching at Wigan, in the connexion of the Countess of Huntingdon, though not in her chapel; and such was Mr. Roby's acceptance and success, that he was, on Mr. Johnson's removal, shortly after, invited to take the charge. Here the new pastor was far from confining himself to his own pulpit; for he became a zealous village preacher, and besides three sermons every Lord's day, in Wigan, preached every night in the week, except Saturday, in the surrounding country. On one occa-

sion, he had but three persons to hear him ; but two of these are said to have been converted to God by the discourse.

The Socinianism which had prevailed in Wigan was so seriously shaken by his faithful preaching, that a lecture was set up to stop the progress of Calvinism; but Mr. Roby, instead of returning railing for railing, rose early one morning, and wrote an excellent tract on the Satisfaction of Christ. The pamphlet was rendered useful, not only in the neighbourhood, but at a distance ; for a lady sent to him, from London, a letter of thanks for the benefit she had derived from the work. By these labours, Mr. Roby was marked out for a more extended sphere, and the study of the Scriptures, with an experience of the working of Congregational or Independent principles, had rendered him a firm convert to that system of ecclesiastical polity.

He received, therefore, in 1795, an invitation to become the pastor of an Independent church at Manchester. Mr. David Bradbury had been the minister at Cannon Street, where the congregation was much reduced by the withdrawment of the greater part to a recently erected chapel in Mosely Street. Mr. Roby was not the man who could merely enter into the labours of others, but was fitted to create his own sphere. He preached three times every Lord's Day, and instead of waiting quietly till the deserted place should be gradually filled by the ordinary course of labour, he went forth and preached in the street, after the afternoon service, embracing this opportunity of announcing to strangers his evening service in the

chapel. Nor did he spend all his strength in preaching, but abounded in private pastoral labours.

It is scarcely necessary to say, that such zeal, accompanied, as it was, by sound judgment and purity of character, was crowned with distinguished success; for "every man shall receive his own reward, according to his labour." From a hundred and fifty hearers, his congregation rose to a thousand; and the church to three hundred and fifty. It became, therefore, necessary to build a larger place, and the spacious chapel in Grosvenor Street was erected, to hold about twelve hundred persons, in which Mr. Roby laboured, till within a few days of his death. Here might be seen the most gratifying proofs of the efficiency of evangelical truth, preached with seriousness and affection, without meretricious ornament, without extravagance, and without display. The attention paid to the young, and to the sabbath schools, produced the happiest effects on the rising generation; and Mr. Roby saw around him, at last, another generation, formed by himself, to perpetuate his usefulness.

He was, as might naturally be expected, one of the first and most zealous advocates of the cause of missions, when the church of God woke up to its great duty towards the heathen world. He paid an annual visit to London, at the anniversaries of the Missionary Society; and his presence was always hailed with delight, as a pledge of the attachment of one who was ready to do every good work. He had, indeed, become well known in London; for, after quitting the Countess of Huntingdon's connexion, he annually filled the pulpit of her principal chapel in Spa Fields, where his

ministry was held in the highest estimation. In the county of Lancaster, he gave full proof, that zeal for foreign missions, is not the rival, but the parent, of efforts for the heathens at home. "The County Union," which he cherished, is one of the most efficient home missionary societies. For his spirit and deportment were exactly what is most calculated to obtain and secure co-operation. Every one felt, that, in him, they had a friend and father, whose wisdom guided and cherished the efforts which his zeal had prompted.

He was, therefore, engaged by Robert Speare, Esq., of Manchester, to give instruction to young men, whom that liberal merchant supported, while they were preparing for the ministry of the Gospel. In this service, Mr. Roby exhibited his usual ability; for, while he was anxious to do much, he was equally careful to do it well. His theological and biblical lectures are said, by competent judges, to have been of a superior order, and some valuable ministers went forth from under his tuition. In this unostentatious labour, he showed his disinterestedness; for he was a gratuitous tutor, Mr. Speare's liberality being wholly applied to the support of the students. But other Christians, in this vicinity, at once rich and generous, projected something more extensive in the way of education, and a seminary was erected at Leaf Square, Manchester, which, at last, terminated in the academy at Blackburne, of which the Rev. Joseph Fletcher was appointed tutor; for, though Mr. Roby would have been chosen, his numerous pastoral engagements, and his important charge, precluded all hope of his being able

to give that time and attention which the higher aim of the new institution required.

In these numerous services Mr. Roby laboured with untiring zeal, till an asthma, contracted in the service of his Redeemer, broke down his frame, before that period to which all who knew him hoped his life would be spared. He struggled against the difficulties which it opposed to his ministry, with eminent Christian patience and cheerfulness; but, on the morning of the new year's day, 1830, he went out to a prayer meeting, at seven o'clock; and though the deep devotion of that service left a lasting impression on his flock, the severity of the weather made them regret this effort, which severely shook his enfeebled frame. With great difficulty, he administered the sacred supper, on the following Lord's day, when his remarks indicated his anticipation of speedy removal to a happier world. In the evening, he preached his thirty-fifth annual sermon to the young. In vain his friends attempted to dissuade him from the attempt, which was manifestly hazardous; but he preached on the hopeful youth falling short of heaven, and then went home to die, breathing out his life in a gentle and peaceful manner, on the 11th of January, 1830, in the sixty-fourth year of his age.

His person indicated the finely balanced mind, in which judgment bore the sway, and passion supplied exactly what was necessary to give energy to his efforts. His self-knowledge employed his talents in the most efficient direction; and his purity of principle and character more than supplied the place of those splendid qualities to which he never pretended.

His influence, which was almost unrivalled, was the legitimate effect of the improvement he made of all his opportunities for the Redeemer's service; and while the liberality displayed at the Manchester missionary meetings is celebrated through the kingdom, these were, to a great extent, the monuments of Mr. Roby's influence and worth. He was a fine specimen of that race which swelled and adorned the ranks of the Dissenters, during this last period of their history; men who were not descended from the Nonconformists, but called out from the Establishment by the power of evangelical preaching, which made them, first Christians; then, by a slow process, Dissenters; and, at last, successful propagators of Dissent, for the sake of its connexion with the salvation of men, and the honour of Christ.

THE REV. GEORGE BURDER, OF LONDON.

This eminently useful minister was born in London, on the 5th of June, 1752. His father, Mr. Henry Burder, was, for many years, a deacon of the Independent Church in Fetter Lane. This honoured son studied Latin at a grammar school, from ten years old, at which time the parent availed himself of the birth-day of his child, to urge upon him most affectionately, the care of his soul. How happy were the effects, we learn from the private diary of the son, who wrote thus; "Then, I trust, sincerely and earnestly, and as far as I can recollect, for the first time, I poured out my soul to God, beseeching him to give me an interest in Christ, and desiring, above all things, to be found in him."

Would, that all parents were thus labouring for their children's salvation, and that all children thus profited by their parent's care!

As George Burder early displayed a fondness for the art of design, he was placed under Mr. Taylor, an engraver. While advancing towards maturity, he heard the celebrated men who were then restoring the light of the Gospel to the Establishment, which had been under an Egyptian night, almost ever since the ejectment of the two thousand Nonconformists. He was much captivated with the eloquence of Whitfield, and with the preaching of faith by Mr. Romaine, rector of St. Anne's, Blackfriars. He has left on record these reflections. "My judgment was before informed, but I now found my heart affected, and became much more fond of that sort of preaching which is termed Methodistical."

At the age of twenty-one, he entered on the business of an engraver, with prospects of success; but secular pursuits were rendered distasteful, by an increasing solicitude for the eternal interests of his fellow creatures. He, therefore, joined a kind of Home Missionary Society, and having, when about twenty-four years of age, taken a journey into Shropshire, he was persuaded by a Christian friend to make a first attempt to preach, in the cottage of a peasant, on one of his father's estates. "I was much assisted," he says, "and had more boldness and liberty than I expected. The people were all attention: some wept much. O, Jesus, friend of sinners, make me so happy as to hear of some turned to thee!" On the evening of the first Lord's day afterwards, finding that the house could not

contain those who came to hear, he took his station under an old oak tree, and preached on a spot where, many years after, he opened a chapel, built at his own expense. On his return to London, he began to preach in the suburban villages, and at length in the city, with much success.

He was now called to decide on the sphere of his future ministry; and though he was attached to the Calvinistic Methodists, and admired some of the Evangelical clergy, he decided on taking his lot with the Congregational Dissenters, on which he afterwards reflected with devout satisfaction, though he always maintained a catholic affection for real Christians of other communions. He accepted a call to the pastoral care of a church at Lancaster, where he laboured six years, not only in the town, but in the surrounding country, which owed to his faithful ministry many of the congregations that now exist. In some years, he preached two hundred and fifty times, and travelled between two and three thousand miles.

He was next called to the care of a church in Coventry, where he continued nearly twenty years, extending his itinerant labours into the counties of Warwick, Stafford, and Nottingham. In all the great movements for the revival and advancement of religion, he took an active part; and when the Missionary Society was formed, in 1795, he joined the sacred band. The first two volumes of his "Village Sermons," he published while at Coventry, though he afterwards extended the work to eight volumes, which were made eminently useful.

He removed to London, to aid in the great under-

takings which now engaged the Christian public, and became pastor of the church in Fetter Lane, where his father had been deacon. For, on the decease of the Rev. John Eyre, of Homerton, an episcopal minister, Mr. Burder was solicited to be his successor in the office of gratuitous secretary of the Missionary Society, and in that of editor of the "Evangelical Magazine." "I ventured to accept these appointments," he says, "I trust, with a sincere desire to glorify God, and edify his church." After having spent ten years in the numerous and laborious engagements for which he came to London, he made the following reflections:—

"When a traveller gets near his journey's end, he notices every hour of time, and observes every milestone which he passes. So, when a man reaches the age of sixty-one, it is high time to consider what progress he has made, and how near he is to home. I hope I am not insensible to these things. I have greatly to admire the goodness of God in continuing so great a degree of health as I now enjoy—greater than at almost any former period of my life. I am inclined to think, the Lord thus favours me, that I may more fully devote myself to his work, which, blessed be his name, is my delight; and I think myself highly favoured in being permitted, not only to preach his Gospel with acceptance and success, but also to engage daily, in promoting his cause among the heathen, by the Missionary Society. To God be all the glory! As to myself, aware of my time of life, I wish to work while it is day, and to watch while I work, that I may be found ready for death and heaven, whensoever the Lord shall call."

In the year 1827, the infirmities of age compelled him to resign his office of Foreign Secretary to the London Missionary Society; in which he had rendered essential service to that institution, by carrying on its correspondence with missionaries in various parts of the globe. The wisdom, piety, and kindness of his character were displayed in this service, as well as in the editorial department of the Evangelical Magazine, over which he watched with anxious care. On the 18th of June, 1826, he observes, "It was fifty years since I preached my first sermon; and this day I have preached to my people, at Fetter Lane, on the same text, (Luke iv. 18). 'This is a day of humiliation; enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord, but graciously accept my very imperfect attempts to serve thy cause. Accept them through Jesus Christ, through whom alone I can hope for the acceptance either of my person or my works.' This must also be a day of thanksgiving. Half a century have I been spared to serve the Lord in his sanctuary, whilst multitudes of younger ministers have finished their course. I suppose I may have preached nearly ten thousand sermons, and, blessed be God, some of the seed has been productive. To God be all the glory, for ever and ever. Amen."

He obtained relief in his pastoral charge, by the election of the Rev. Caleb Morris, to share it with him. On his birth-day, June 5, 1829, he wrote his last reflections in his private diary. "Seven years ago, when I concluded my seventieth year, I called my family together, prayed with them, gave them some advice, and read a paper, which I committed to their

care. Of the domestic circle, which then surrounded me, no less than four are gone to the grave; my dear wife, my two dear daughters, and my dear daughter-in-law, the beloved wife of my son Henry—all gone; and I, who am older than any of them, still spared, and complete, this day, my seventy-seventh year. A few days ago, I visited the spot where the mortal remains of the above are deposited, and in which this frail body must soon be laid up. O that, with them, I may have a joyful resurrection to eternal life! The disorder in my face, of ten years' standing, continues gradually, though slowly, to increase, and with increasing pain, which I endeavour daily to bear with patience. My chief complaint is the weakness of my faith."

Though his sight, which had been long failing, was finally lost, he continued to preach with great animation and effect, till the month of March in that year in which he died. But his last public service was rendered peculiarly affecting by his text: "A man of sorrows," and the natural association of the sufferings of the servant with those of his Lord. For the last two months of his life, he suffered much from debility, but was kept in peace—looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life, into whose hands he resigned his spirit, on the 29th of May, 1832, and was buried in Bunhill Fields, on the eightieth anniversary of his birth-day.

Though he had not regularly studied for the ministry, he was far from being an illiterate man; for the advantages of his early acquaintance with the classics, he had so improved by a life of study, that he surpassed

many who had gone through an academical course. His good sense taught him the value of learning; his high principle impelled him to do every thing that could render his ministry most effective, and his industrious improvement of time, enabled him to pursue studies which, amidst his abounding labours, might have been thought impossible. His Village Sermons, therefore, evince a thorough acquaintance with the subjects on which they treat, and their style is all that the occasion requires. They obtained an unprecedented sale; for they were employed, not only by itinerant village preachers, for whom they seem to have been intended, but by the clergy of the Establishment, to an extent that would to many seem incredible. Numerous were the instances in which they were crowned by that Divine blessing which rendered them the means of salvation. As their spirit is truly catholic, many who preached or heard them, were not aware of the connexion to which the author belonged, but, under the dominion of strong prejudices against Dissent, received eternal benefit from the instructions of a Dissenter.

For Mr. Burder was much more decidedly an Independent, than those who viewed him on the other side of his character, would have supposed or believed. Though he loved rather to dwell upon the harmony than on the differences among Christians, and never lost his early attachment for the Calvinistic Methodists, and the evangelical clergy; when the zealots of any other communion attacked that to which he belonged, he surprized his most intimate acquaintances by the decision and energy of his defence. Of this, abundant

proof was furnished by the Evangelical Magazine, while it was under his management. His first care was to render it conducive to the interests of evangelical religion; his second, to preserve its catholic character; and his third, to make it a defence against all attacks on religious liberty, or the rights of Dissenters. He maintained a wise and vigilant supervision, corresponding with ministers all over the kingdom, to obtain from them contributions on every subject that might render the magazine a public blessing. In a similar spirit he watched and laboured for the London Missionary Society, as its foreign secretary, and to his character and conduct it owed much of its prosperity and success. Few men have so faithfully improved the talents with which they have been entrusted as George Burder.

THE REV. THOMAS SPENCER, OF LIVERPOOL.

As some apology may be required for giving to a youth, who had but just commenced his ministry, a place in the list from which many who died full of years and usefulness are excluded; we plead his unparalleled celebrity as a preacher, which would have rendered the omission of this memoir a fault, in a history designed to record whatever is most worthy of notice among Dissenters.

Thomas Spencer was born at Hertford, July 21st, 1791. From the earliest childhood his precocious talents were developed, and when five years old, having lost his mother, he made, on the event, reflections which produced an effect far more lasting than is usual with children of that age. A combination of sweetness of

disposition, with mental vigour, early won to him those attachments, which afterwards rose to unbounded popularity. But his greediness of books led to the reading of novels, and other works, which tainted his mind, and gave occasion to bitter regrets. It is observed by his biographer, that "from the deep waters of spiritual distress, through which he was called to pass, his soul imbibed an air of humility, and a habit of watchfulness, which enabled him to meet, with firmness, the dangers of popularity, and to maintain a steady course, notwithstanding the press of sail he carried."

With poetry in general, and particularly with that of Kirk White, a kindred soul, of kindred fate, he soon became enamoured. But, for preaching he seemed to be born, and this became the darling passion of his childhood. He gathered around him an audience of children, and exhibited, to their astonishment, addresses, sometimes borrowed, indeed, but not unfrequently the fruit of his own genius. Tidings of his preaching soon circulated beyond his domestic circle, and many who flocked to listen to this infantile orator, regarded him as the "parson in miniature." A gentleman from Manchester, who had visited Hertford, described to a friend, an exhibition of singularly appropriate preaching, on our Lord's sermon to Nicodemus, by this little boy when he was but about ten years old.

This furnishes, however, a useful warning to partial and admiring friends; for if it be inferred, that a child who could thus preach on regeneration, must have been regenerated; be it known, that it was not till two

years after, that the change, essential to the Christian, and the minister, was produced on his heart. This naturally heightened, as well as purified his desire for the Christian ministry, and led him to bow with meekness to some disappointments he endured. By Mr. Ebenezer White, then minister at Hertford, but afterwards called away, by an early death, from the care of a church at Chester, young Spencer was introduced to an acquaintance with Latin. His father, who had nobly struggled to give to the child of such hopes a good education, was afterwards induced to take him into his own business.

After having been placed in trade with a pious citizen of London, he was introduced to the Treasurer of Hoxton College, who sent him for preparatory instruction, to Mr. Hordle, of Harwich, when scarcely fifteen. To this sojourn has been ascribed his premature fitness for the work of the ministry, so that he had, when a student, the grave reflections of a pastor; and the earliest exercises of the pulpit indicated the hand of a master rather than a learner. After making considerable progress in Latin, he commenced the study of Hebrew, to which he became so much devoted, that he wrote out, in a small pocket manual, an abridgment of Parkhurst's Lexicon. His religion improved equally with his learning, and he won, as usual, the hearts of all his acquaintance. But the appointed time being arrived, he was received, though not without objections to his youth, into the College at Hoxton. His letters, and skeletons of sermons, at this time, are beautiful specimens of all that we could wish to see in the youthful aspirant for the ministry. Diligence in

study gave those promises of future excellence which are seldom belied, and his first vacation was spent in village preaching, in which he was compelled to abound, by the admiration and delight of the hearers. A preacher of sixteen drew many to witness the phenomenon, who soon pronounced him a "man of God, mighty in the Scriptures."

On his return to his father's house, at the Christmas vacation, he preached, for the first time, at Hertford, where the companions of his youth were his delighted auditors. His choice of subjects displayed equal judgment and seriousness, and his style was free from the usual faults of his age. Having been requested to read the chapter, and pray before the sermon, at Hoxton chapel, his appearance led some to think, that a little boy had, by mistake, gone into the pulpit; but such was the effect, that he became, from this time, the great magnet of attraction to the place. He was, therefore, invited to preach; and instead of the embarrassment which too often arises, not from modesty, but from thoughts of *self*, he exhibited all the composure and earnestness that result from being absorbed in the subject, and carried away by solicitude for the hearers.

Now commenced his greatest perils; for his fame drew around him flatterers, and applications for his services, from all parts. It is, however, delightful to record, that he was saved from those injudicious friends, who are the most dangerous foes. His letters, during the rising gale, or rather storm of popularity, breathe the same humility as had marked his earlier correspondence. Judiciously held back by his real friends, he preached chiefly in the workhouses of the

metropolis, in which the students at Hoxton were accustomed to try their wings. In the surrounding country, however, he preached not less than sixty times, during the next half year. After this, he officiated again at Hoxton, with increasing popularity; and being sent to Brighton, excited such interest in that gay watering place, that the public prints, abandoning other news, were occupied with his merits, while he wisely availed himself of the youth which gave him such advantages to win the hearts of the young to wisdom's ways. But his efforts were beyond his strength, and the symptoms of disease induced his friends to send him to Dorking, as a quiet and less exciting field of labour. Being restored to health, he returned to London, and preached frequently at Jewin Street, for Mr. Timothy Priestly, the brother of the philosopher; and the increase of the congregation led them to ask that he might become their minister. For declining this invitation he has been blamed; but a Christian friend, who knew his heart, says, "It would be unjust to his memory, not to declare that he was free from blame. I claimed the whole of his time, between, and after, the services When going to preach, no one saw him. I used to knock at his door, give in his refreshments, and watch the time for him. It was from the mount of communion that he always went to the pulpit, and this caused his services to shine gloriously. Frequently, in passing to the house of God, we kept perfect silence, while his mind has been so entirely absorbed, that I have found a necessity of guiding him; and, after worship, he tried to stop as long as he conveniently could, that he might pass away

unnoticed. I must confess, that I should have found great difficulty in giving our fallen nature credit for the excellences which, from the closest inspection, I saw resident in that truly illustrious and holy youth."

He was appointed to spend his Midsummer vacation, in 1810, at Liverpool. Being prejudiced against the place, he reluctantly submitted; but his biographer, who was also his successor, testified, that " the impression produced by the labours of his first Sabbath has not subsided to this day. The report of his extraordinary powers prevailed, and all classes pressed to witness them. The chapel soon became thronged to excess; and not alone the thoughtless and the gay, whom the charms of a persuasive eloquence and an engaging manner might attract, but pious and experienced Christians sat at his feet with deep attention and delight. A divine unction evidently attended his ministry; and such were the effects produced, that every beholder exclaimed, with astonishment and admiration, ' What has God wrought ! ' "

On his return, he received a unanimous invitation to succeed Mr. Bruce, the former pastor of the congregation at Newington, Liverpool. After seven weeks' consideration and prayer, he accepted the charge, on condition of being expected to preach but twice on the Lord's day, as he had found his constitution injured by more frequent labours. He delivered his last sermon, at Hoxton, to an immensely crowded audience; and commenced his ministry at Liverpool, Feb. 3, 1811, when he was just twenty years old. To a friend he wrote, " O what a memorable day to me was the first Sabbath I spent in this

place! Every circumstance that took place afterward is worthy of attention and big with events. Never before had I entered a pulpit with those awful, solemn feelings with which I was impressed that morning. The idea of appearing in a new character, and of entering on a station which I have no view of relinquishing till the day of my death; the weight of responsibility which attaches to the ministerial character; the dread lest I should act, in any way, unworthy of my sacred office. All these things would naturally impart unusual solemnity to the mind. On that day, heaven is my witness of the resolutions I formed. O that God may ever enable me to put them in execution."

The chapel was soon crowded to excess, in a town which had been remarkable for its indifference to religion. Happily, however, he who had the honour of changing the whole scene, was not elated by his popularity; but, in proportion as he rose in public estimation, he sunk in his own esteem. The necessity of providing greater accommodation for those who pressed to hear him, induced the congregation to build, in an eligible spot, a noble place of worship, capable of containing two thousand hearers. On his return from a visit to Brighton, he laid the foundation stone, April 15, 1811, and addressed a congregation of six thousand persons.

Mr. Spencer now became, every day, more entirely devoted to his ministry. His character advanced to maturity with astonishing rapidity; and he seemed, like his Lord, to "grow in favour with God and man." Loveliness and seriousness were so happily combined in him, that, while he was absorbed in his pastoral

duties, he won the hearts of all by the spirit with which he discharged them. Having been called to deliver a funeral oration over the grave of his friend, Mr. White, of Chester, he observed, in a letter to his college patron, Mr. Wilson, of London, "I think the world has lately appeared to me in its true light: '*it passeth away.*'" In this spirit he was ordained to the pastoral charge of the church, on the 29th of June, when his delicate frame was almost overwhelmed by the deep devotion which he felt. Mr. Hordle, of Harwich, gave him a charge which contained a passage scarcely less than prophetic: "You, my dear young brother, must die and stand at the bar of God. Your ordination service may be only a prelude to your funeral service: 'for what is man? He is but of yesterday, and his days are as a shadow.' How often have we seen the sun go down while it is yet day; and while the church has been pleasing itself with the prospect of enjoying the pious, fervent labours of an endeared minister, for years, an unexpected stroke has separated them for ever. Mourning survivors have, wondering, said, 'Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel the Saviour.'"

On the first Lord's day in July, he administered the Lord's supper in such a spirit, that the impression of the scene was retained by the church, for years. On the last sabbath of that month, he preached a collection sermon for the new chapel, on the words of Ezra, "And now for a little space grace has been shewed from the Lord our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little

reviving in our bondage." Having exerted himself greatly, he complained of a pain at the heart. The following day he spent in deliberation with his friends, on the state of the church, and in a conversation with some candidates for admission to the communion. He visted a sick person, and attended the prayer-meeting, recapitulating a sermon preached the preceding day, by Mr. Davies, of London, with an exactness that astonished every one who heard him. He then went out to engage in numerous services for neighbouring churches, and on the 2d of August wrote to a friend, "I found growing pleasure in my ministerial employment. This evening I have to admit eight new members to church communion. When I accepted this situation, I never conceived that I should have half the engagements or duties to attend to, which I now find must be accomplished; if I would merit the character of an active, useful, minister of religion. I think my recent afflictions, and the solemn duties which now devolve upon me, have, in a considerable degree, chastened my character, and imparted, perhaps, a seriousness to my general deportment, which may prove highly advantageous to me in future life. How long this will last, I cannot tell." He then wrote, like a pious son, to his afflicted father, and having closed his correspondence with distant friends on earth, he went out to renew his pastoral visits to those who were to be received into the church. At the church meeting, that evening, he gave them an affectionate welcome, accompanied with most appropriate counsels. The duties of a pastor, he discharged with an ease, a grace,

and a wisdom, that are not always acquired by the experience of years.

The following morning he spent in the study, preparing for the pulpit, and writing to one of those whom he had just received into the church. On the last Sabbath that he spent on earth, August 4th, he rose, with unusual health and spirits, and preached on Jeremiah, xxxi. 3. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." The divisions of the discourse were adapted to the occasion—the celebration of the Lord's supper, by a number of new communicants.—"I have drawn thee, 1st, To the cross; 2d, To the throne; 3d, To the church." His spirit was so fervent in devotion, that he said, I thought I could have prayed and prayed, and mounted up to heaven; so that an aged Christian remarked, "Mr. Spencer seemed, that morning, seventy years older in experience than he really was." In the evening, he addressed an immense crowd, hundreds being unable to gain access. He commended to the young, Mary's choice, and urged them to choose the good part, with a most persuasive earnestness, saying, "Very soon I shall meet you at the bar of God." Those who were best able to judge, pronounced this, which was his last sermon, the best fitted for usefulness of any he had ever preached. The event confirmed the sentence. His successor observed, some time after, "Instances are still perpetually occurring of the deep impression produced by that discourse, and not a few of those who are now members of the church over which he presided, have dated their first

serious thoughts, from that evening. His conversation afterwards was on death. He spoke of the transport and surprise in which the disembodied spirit would be lost, when first admitted into the immediate presence of God. He enlarged on the blessedness of putting off the garments of mortality, in a moment, and being caught up unexpectedly and instantaneously to heaven. His friends could not escape the unwelcome presentiment of his early removal.

"The next morning, he expressed his intention to bathe, which he had found conducive to his health; and having just repeated the first verse of Cowper's beautiful hymn—

> 'God moves in a mysterious way,
> His wonders to perform:
> He plants his footsteps in the sea,
> And rides upon the storm:'

a friend reminded him, that it was time to go, if he wished to bathe; for it would soon be high water. He said, 'I cannot tell how it is; but I do not feel so much inclined to go, to-day, as usual.' He went, however, and was drowned.

"The body was soon found; but every attempt to restore animation failed. The tidings spread through Liverpool instantaneously, and produced an effect equal to the death of a king. On the Exchange, this was the sole theme of discourse. Those who knew him, bewailed him as a brother, or an only child; and those who knew him not, sympathized with the general grief. The public prints of Liverpool, bore the most honourable testimony to his worth, observing, that it scarcely ever before fell to the lot of any indi-

vidual, at so early an age, to have diffused religious impression through so extensive a circle of hearers. His funeral produced, in Liverpool, the effect of a national calamity; and, indeed, the sad catastrophe spread over the kingdom lamentation, mourning, and woe."

It has been judiciously recorded by the pen of the most eloquent of writers, that "his eloquence consisted less of any one quality requisite to form a public speaker, than in an exquisite combination of them all." His natural abilities were good, rather than great; for, while they who heard him imagined that his dominion over them was the effect of transcendent mental force; nothing that he has left on record would justify that conclusion. Paradoxical as it may seem, this mediocrity, if it should be so called, contributed in a high degree to his unrivalled popularity. For those rare and vigorous combinations of thought, and felicitous forms of expression, which blaze on the pages of recorded eloquence, must, while they strike and charm a few minds of the highest order, be lost upon the mass, for want of correspondent associations. But Spencer's eloquence was, in the noblest sense, that of the heart. Every sentence he uttered was judicious, if not brilliant or profound; and his language was exactly that which the pulpit demands, simple, clear, and fitted, like light, to hide itself, in order to show every thing else. Piety, exalted and mature, far beyond his years, was the secret charm that gave him unrivalled sway. His youthful appearance heightened the loveliness of his countenance, which was rendered doubly effective, by a voice of so much sweetness and distinctness, as

produced the happiest combination of persuasion and strength. His *manner* was in harmony with the whole; for, while he sometimes stooped, and leaned over the pulpit, in familiar converse with the audience, he usually maintained a commanding dignity, that spoke all his own sense of the grandeur of his theme, and its importance to the eternal interests of men.

The God who lent him to the church, had evidently designed to indulge him, in a few short years, with the usefulness of a long life. Of this he felt the presentiment, though his end was hidden from him; and the ardour of youth, with the solemnity of one on the borders of eternity, produced an effect so rare, that it seemed almost miraculous. Never disposed to spoil by affectation, or vanity, the exquisite impressions he imparted, he escaped the envy which usually hovers round the popular favourite; and while he was, perhaps, idolized by the young, he was loved, and even revered, by the more experienced Christians, who were alive to the dangers of youthful popularity. An elderly minister, whom all the churches esteemed for his wisdom and sanctity, being told of one who was so popular, that, when he preached, it was difficult to get into the place, exclaimed, "Get into the place! When Spencer preaches, you cannot get into the street." His popularity was felt to be that of religion, rather than of the man, and therefore all who loved the cause enjoyed its triumph. The concentration of his powers, and their entire consecration to the salvation of men by the Gospel, gave him his decided superiority in the pulpit; for the half of such a man

as Spencer is more than the whole of any other man. And where is the preacher to be found who equalled him in the *entireness* of his zeal for the great work of the ministry? Those who are intended for length of days, are called to serve Christ in various ways, and this division of their forces, though conducive to greater ultimate usefulness, precludes that intensity of effect which results from converging every ray to one common centre. The Sovereign Lord has shown us, in Spencer, what might be done for religion in a little time; for his usefulness was not transient as his life, which created a new era in Liverpool; and the noble edifice built for him who was never to occupy it, is filled by the labours of a successor, who proves the inexhausted resources of him that employs one servant to "lay the foundation, and another to build thereon."*

ROBERT MORRISON, D.D. F.R.S. MISSIONARY IN CHINA.

The celebrity of this Chinese scholar, claiming for him a distinguished place among eminent Dissenters, affords, also, an opportunity of giving to one of the missionaries of Christ the honourable memorial which is their due. Robert Morrison, the youngest child of Mr. James Morrison, of Perthshire, in Scotland, was born at Morpeth, January 5, 1782. As his parents removed to Newcastle, when he was three years old, having been placed under his uncle, Mr. James Nicholson, a respectable schoolmaster there, at the usual age, he became an apprentice to his father, as a last and boot-tree maker. At the age of sixteen, he became

* Dr. Raffle's Life of Spencer.

decidedly pious; and, on the first day of the year 1799, he began to keep a journal of his religious experience, and to devote himself to study. His father appears to have taken an honourable share in the formation of his intellectual and religious character, of which, in old age, the venerable man reaped the most gratifying fruits. But Mr. Laidler, the minister of the Presbyterian church, not only promoted by his public ministry the piety which afterwards produced effects so important to the Christian church, but also imparted to young Morrison some knowledge of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, systematic theology, and short hand. Having become a member of a society for the relief of the friendless, his zeal attracted the notice and esteem of the inhabitants of the town, and marked him out as one who, "fathful in a few things, was to be made ruler over many."

Deprived of his mother, by death, in 1802, he was received, at the commencement of the following year, on the recommendation of Mr. Laidler, into the dissenting seminary for the ministry at Hoxton, near London. Here, having pursued his studies little more than a year, he offered himself to the London Missionary Society, to go to preach Christ to the heathen, and being accepted, was sent to their Mission College at Gosport, to be educated under the Rev. Dr. Bogue. Robert Morrison made choice of China as his future field of labour, and, from that moment, his decision of character was displayed in full force, by the entire consecration of his existence to this most magnificent sphere of Christian enterprize.

He returned to London, therefore, in the summer of

1806, and obtained the assistance of Yong-Sam-Tac, a Chinese, as his preceptor, who laid the foundation of that knowledge of the language of the Celestial Empire, in which Dr. Morrison surpassed all Europeans. Having procured from the British Museum a manuscript version of the four Gospels in Chinese, and another work in that language, the property of the Royal Society, he devoted himself to the labour of transcription, by which he made important acquisitions in the calligraphy, and vocabulary, and idioms of the language. Taking a useful hint from the Catholic missionaries in China, he laboured to acquire all that science by which they obtained so much influence over the Chinese. He was assisted by Dr. Blair, who introduced him to a knowledge of medicine and surgery, admitting him to his course of lectures, and giving him the privilege of walking St. Bartholomew's Hospital. Dr. Hutton, of Greenwich, co-operated in the same benevolent work, by aiding him in the study of astronomy.

Having taken these important preparatory steps, he was ordained as a missionary to China, at the Scotch church, Swallow Street, January 8, 1807. He embarked, on the 31st; but, to the disgrace of our country at that time, it must be recorded, that he was obliged to go by way of America, because the East India Company resisted the attempt to evangelize the heathen, over whom God had given this empire an extensive sway. Landing at Macao, on the 4th of September, 1807, Mr. Morrison proceeded to Canton, where he was accommodated with lodgings in the factory of the American agents, Messrs. Milner and

Bull; so that to the citizens of the United States must be awarded the honour of having introduced into China the first translator of the Scriptures into the most extensive language on the globe.

In his earliest efforts to acquire the complete command of the tongue, Mr. Morrison adopted the native costume, wishing to become perfectly Chinese; but finding that this gave offence, he returned to the European dress; for he constantly made it his study to conciliate the Chinese by every legitimate means. The first sixteen months of his residence in China, he passed amidst many trials and privations; for the jealousy of the government made it necessary for him to keep himself private; and his zeal for the acquisition of the language induced him to spend the day with his Chinese teacher, with whom he took his meals, studying and sleeping in a room under ground, and foregoing the pleasures of intercourse with Europeans, that he might form the habit of thinking, as well as speaking, in Chinese. Nothing but such devotion to his noble object can account for his acquiring, in eighteen months, the reputation of the best Chinese scholar in the factory; and informing the Missionary Society, at the close of the year 1808, that he had, in little more than a year, completed a grammar of the Chinese tongue; that his dictionary of that language was daily advancing to perfection; and that he had a manuscript of the New Testament in Chinese almost fit to be printed. The latter, however, he delayed, till he should have made still further advances in the language; wishing to render his translation, on its first appearance, as perfect as possible. The grammar of

the Chinese was not what Europeans would naturally imagine; for, in the ordinary sense, the language has no grammar; but even this was necessary to be known by those who commence the study, that they might confine their attention to that peculiar collocation of words which is made to supply the place of the inflexions in other tongues. The dictionary was, of course, the work of every day and every hour, being enriched by each new word that was met with in conversation and books, or by each new application that was discovered to belong to terms already known.

His solitary life, with its numerous privations, was happily relieved, on the 20th of February, 1809, when he married Miss Mary Morton, a young lady of eighteen, the daughter of the surgeon-in-chief to the Royal Irish Artillery. The memoir of this lady, written by her husband, proves that in her, a kind Providence had given him a rich reward for his previous sacrifices and toils. The letters she wrote to him, when called every season from Macao to Canton, display all that is estimable int he Christian woman, the wife, and the mother. Suffering under a serious and painful nervous affection, she found relief, during the unavoidably frequent privation of her husband's society, in books; though her attempts to acquire the Chinese language, were rendered abortive by illness. In one of her letters, she observes; "I am a Christian on the broad scale, and feel good will towards all Christians of every sect. I think no one can lay to our charge any party spirit; we have never shown it in our conduct; because we did not feel it."

The rewards and facilities for his work were now

poured in abundantly upon the devoted missionary; for, the very day after his marriage, he received the gratifying information, that the supercargoes of the East India Company, to whom he had rendered valuable assistance in translating their Chinese correspondence, had resolved to appoint him, as the most perfect Chinese scholar, their secretary and interpreter. Their correspondence with the natives had previously been conducted with great difficulty by a circuitous route:—the Portuguese padres, or priests of the College of St. Joseph, rendered the papers, that were to be translated from English into Chinese, first into Latin, and then gave them to their native assistants to be translated into Chinese. It is obvious that this process must have given rise to much imperfection in the ultimate result.

Mr. Morrison justified to the Missionary Society, his acceptance of a civil employment, by displaying the facilities it would afford him in the prosecution of the object of his mission, and the saving which it would occasion to their funds. He, in fact, after this, supported himself while labouring for them. He early came to the conclusion, that the ordinary means of introducing Christianity, by entering a country and preaching the Gospel, could not, at that time, be employed in China; but that his field of labour was the press. He had studied carefully the people to whose eternal interests he had devoted his life, and found, that, while their jealousy utterly excluded resident or itinerant foreigners, they possessed a literary character, in some respects, superior to that of any other nation in the world; for their written

language, which was a medium of communication to one-third of the human race, was cultivated with a zeal that was the natural result of making it the road to distinction in society, and elevation to posts of honour and power under the government. Mr. Morrison determined, therefore, to avail himself of this singular and important fact, to attack the strongholds of Paganism, and furnish the Chinese, by means of the press, with a Christian literature that would ultimately convey the knowledge of the Gospel to three hundred and eighty millions of our fellow creatures.

He commenced his operations, in 1812, by printing, at Canton, in the Chinese manner, from wooden blocks, an edition of the Acts of the Apostles. In the same year, he forwarded to Lord Minto, the Governor-General of India, his grammar of the Chinese language, to be printed at the Calcutta press; but difficulties arising, it was not till the year 1815, that it issued from the Serampore press, at the expense of the East India Company, with types prepared for it in England.

Amidst the highest honours of usefulness, and of an important civil station, he was exposed to the insults which were, at that time, poured upon Christian Missionaries. "These slights," Mrs. Morrison observes, in one of her letters to him, "should be indifferent to us; they will not take any thing from our happiness. Yet, one cannot help being hurt at the marked inattentions to which I am frequently exposed. But I believe the Chinese doctrine, of bearing insults, is the wisest plan to follow. They reason very simply, and very well. It is certainly the person who causelessly insults

us, that ought to be ashamed, and not ourselves, for bearing patiently with them. As Christians, also, we have a much higher motive for being humble and peaceable." There was, at this period, a systematic effort made, by many influential persons in the service of the East India Company, to crush all missions to the heathen; but patience and perseverance, and the manifest good effect of the labours of the despised men, at last turned the scale in their favour.

In the year 1813, Mr. Morrison completed an edition of the New Testament, in Chinese, of which he forwarded a few copies to Europe. Large editions of this most important work were published in 1815, 1819, 1822, and 1827, and were extensively circulated in China. He printed, also, a Catechism, in Chinese, with a tract on the Doctrines of Christianity, of which fifteen thousand copies were circulated. But, in the following year, he thought of giving up his situation in China, and retiring to Java, or Malacca; for so serious was the opposition he endured, that the Court of Directors ordered that his services to the factory should cease. It was pretended, that his translation of the Scriptures was opposed to an edict of the Emperor of China, which prohibited the Chinese from consulting certain Christian books published by the Jesuits. Mr. Morrison addressed, therefore, a letter to the supercargoes, in vindication of his conduct; reminding them, that, when he accepted a civil office, he had not consented to abandon his religious character as a missionary. He observed, that it was the temporal authority claimed for the Pope by the Jesuits, which excited the jealousy of the acute Chinese, and called forth the

imperial edict; while the quiet unobtrusive circulation of theological writings among a highly literary people, was not liable to the same objection. These explanations being deemed satisfactory, his services to the factory were retained.

The first number of his Dictionary of the Chinese Language, was printed on the 29th of December, 1815, at a press, established for that purpose, at Macao. The first part, containing the Chinese and English, arranged like the native Chinese dictionaries, *according to the* RADICALS, fills three quarto volumes, each containing about nine hundred pages. This systematic arrangement removes the difficulty, which, till then, had been found insuperable by Europeans, in their attempts to learn the speech and writings of the Chinese. The second part, which occupies two volumes, contains the Chinese and English, arranged *alphabetically;* and the third part consists of English words, with their correspondent Chinese. This stupendous work, which it would be difficult for the Christian or the philosopher to overrate, was completed on the 5th of April, 1822, when he had been absent fifteen years in China. Worthy to be the labour of a life, it stands as an imperishable monument of the author's diligence and ability; and we cannot wonder at the complaints he made, at this time, of the severe headaches under which he was labouring. The dedication to the Court of Directors of the East India Company, was an honour well deserved; for by its orders the Company's funds were charged with the entire expense of its publication, amounting to about twelve thousand pounds. After directing the distribution of

a hundred copies, the Court generously presented to the author, the remainder of the impression, for circulation among his friends, or for sale on his own account.

After Mr. Morrison had completed his translation of the New Testament, he obtained the co-operation of Mr. Milne, who had been sent to Malacca, by the London Missionary Society. This valuable man, who was worthy to be the coadjutor of Morrison, would have claimed a distinct memoir in the History of Dissenters, if his predecessor had not engrossed the whole space that could be afforded to this department. Mr. Milne was a native of Scotland; and having, very early in life, devoted himself, with uncommon ardour, first to religion, and then to missions, he was educated at the Mission College, in Gosport, under Dr. Bogue. In China, entering into most cordial friendship with his senior fellow-labourer, Mr. Milne acquired, with surprising rapidity, a profound knowledge of Chinese, and translated into that language the book of Deuteronomy, the latter historical parts of the Old Testament, and the book of Job. With this aid, a Chinese version of the Old Testament was published, Nov. 25, 1819; and thus the whole inspired Scriptures were published, for a third of the human race, in nineteen octavo volumes. Other editions of this invaluable work have been subsequently printed, at the expense of the British and Foreign Bible Society; and Morrison prepared, previously to his decease, a revision of the vast undertaking. It is most gratifying to record, that Leang-a-fa, a native Chinese, converted to the faith of Christ by the labours of Milne, assisted in carrying

through the press the sacred volume, destined to be the instrument of salvation to his countrymen. But Mr. Milne, after exciting the loftiest hopes, and receiving from his native land a doctor's degree, fell a sacrifice to his labours among the Chinese, in 1822.

Mr. Morrison published, in 1817, a quarto volume, entitled "A View of China, for Philological Purposes," containing a sketch of Chinese chronology, geography, government, religion, and customs, for the use of students of the Chinese language. In the same year, he was called to accompany, as Chinese interpreter, Lord Amherst, on his embassy to Pekin. In this important enterprize, he made the ambassador acquainted with the fact, that the presents from the King of England were forwarded, on the great canal, in boxes, which bore flags announcing that this was tribute from the King of Great Britain to the Emperor of China. Of this embassy, which had a mortifying termination, Mr. Morrison wrote a memoir, which was afterwards published in this country. At the close of this year, the Senatus Academicus of the University of Glasgow, conferred on him the degree of Doctor in Divinity.

Dr. Morrison now carried into execution a project which he had long cherished,—the establishment of an Anglo-Chinese college, at Malacca, for the cultivation of the language and literature of the two countries, with a view to the introduction of the Gospel into China. The Missionary Society had previously obtained a grant of land, for a mission-house, on which, with some purchased in addition, the college was erected. Dr. Morrison generously gave

a thousand pounds towards the object, and a hundred per annum for five years. He drew up a code of laws for its government, on Christian principles; and, in 1827, Mr. Fullerton, the Governor of Prince of Wales' Island, gave a sketch of the history of the college; and after recommending the East India Company to afford it pecuniary aid, as useful to their servants, he added, "I do not contemplate any interference in the direct management of the institution, being perfectly satisfied that it is now in better hands." Dr. Morrison visited it, in 1822, and entered into arrangements for the formation of another kindred institution at Singapore; but when Sir Stamford Raffles, the liberal patron of the new college, left the East, the whole scheme failed. The Malacca College, however, still exists, a flourishing monument of Dr. Morrison's wisdom, liberality, and zeal. Its patrons are Sir George Staunton, Col. Farquhar, the Hon. E. Phillips, and the Hon. J. Erskine. It is, at present, under the tuition of Messrs. Evans and Dyer, missionaries, from the London Society, and has seventy students, Chinese and Malays, some of whom discover a decided and enlightened attachment to the Christian religion; and a Christian church is there rising, composed of converted Chinese.

Having lost his excellent wife, in 1821, Dr. Morrison, some time after, embarked for his native country, whither his son and daughter had preceded him; and, in March, 1824, he arrived in England, after an absence of almost eighteen years. He was received with distinguished attention in the several religious and literary circles in England and Scotland, and also

in Paris, where he spent part of the summer of 1825. He was enrolled among the members of the Royal Society; and presented, by the President of the Board of Control, at the levee, to the King, to whom he presented a copy of his version of the Scriptures in Chinese, with some other of his Chinese works.

To promote the study of the Chinese language in this country, he brought with him a valuable library, consisting of several thousand works in that tongue. He founded, with the aid of friends, what he called, "The Language Institution," for the study of those tongues which missionaries would need to acquire, that they might not be obliged to commence, in an unfavourable climate, the very elements of languages which they might, to a considerable extent, learn at home. This, like all Dr. Morrison's projects, was of the most catholic character, being open to *all* missionaries. Under his own personal superintendence it flourished, and afforded the most valuable aid to some who are now labouring among the heathen; but, on his return to China, it soon declined, and in two years expired. For, though it was, at once most useful and most economical, as Professor Johnson, of the East India College at Heylebury, and other literary gentlemen, gave their valuable services gratuitously; it was found that there was no regular supply of students, even from all the missionary societies combined. Dr. Morrison deeply lamented the failure of the scheme; but the gentleman above named, has diminished the evil consequences, by generously affording his services to those missionaries who are destined to the East.

During his residence in England, Dr. Morrison published "The Chinese Miscellany;" consisting of extracts from Chinese authors, in the native character, with translations, and philological comments. In this work, he had recourse to lithography, which he recommended as peculiarly adapted to the multiplication of copies in the Chinese character, and which he subsequently introduced into China.

Having, in 1824, married Miss Armstrong, of Liverpool, he returned, two years after, to China, under the auspices of the Court of Directors of the East India Company, who had consented to the temporary suspension of his services in the East. He was accompanied by his wife, and their infant son, with his two elder children. After the termination of the Company's charter, Lord Napier arrived at Macao, with his Majesty's commission for a new administration of the British affairs in China. But the Chinese, refusing to receive him, his lordship determined to proceed to Canton, without their consent; and commanding the services of Dr. Morrison, whose superior knowledge and judgment in these affairs should have been consulted, the two lives were sacrificed to a most disastrous expedition. Dr. Morrison, though at that time in declining health, could not refuse his services, as Lord Napier had, in pursuance of his instructions, appointed him Chinese secretary and interpreter to the commission. Proceeding with his lordship, in an open boat, they were exposed to a storm of rain, in Canton river, on the night of the 24th of July, and did not arrive in Canton till the following morning. From that time, disease made rapid advances on the exhausted

frame of Dr. Morrison, and he expired in the arms of his eldest son, John Robert Morrison, on the first of August, 1834, in the fifty-third year of his age. His remains were carried, from his residence in the Danish Hong, to Macao, and followed to the water side, by Lord Napier, and all the Europeans, Americans, and Asiatic subjects of Britain, then in Canton. He was buried, on the fifth of August, by the side of his first wife, and one of his children, in the private Protestant burial ground, at Macao, attended by the most respectable inhabitants of the place.

The magnitude of the loss sustained by his removal, was best known, if not most deeply felt, in that part of the world to which he had consecrated the labours of his life. "Countless millions of the human race," it was there observed, "may have to rejoice in the effects of his toils; and, when the attainment of the Chinese shall have become an easy task, a succession of Chinese scholars will owe to him the means whereby they acquired it; and long, very long, will it be before there shall be found among them one whose knowledge of China, and of Chinese literature, shall be as extensive and solid as his—one, whose mind shall be as thoroughly saturated with Chinese lore."

His superior knowledge and judgment are admitted to have been, on some trying occasions, of immense value to the East India Company. He was more than once called into council at Canton; and whenever his advice was followed, the result proved his wisdom. In what was called the Lintin affair, he was the only person at the factory capable of opposing argument to the claims of the Chinese, over whom he triumphed.

Had his advice, which was always that of the Christian philanthropist, been followed on some occasions, great inconvenience and loss would have been avoided. There are but few among the Company's servants, formerly on the Canton establishment, who were not indebted to him for their knowledge of Chinese; for which, indeed, he was allowed, till nearly the time of his death, to draw largely on the Company's funds.

It is well known in the circles of British India, that Dr. Morrison was the first European who prepared documents in the Chinese language, which the Chinese authorities would consent to receive; and that his *first* attempt being mistaken by them for the production of a learned Chinese, means were employed to discover the author, who was regarded by the Chinese laws as guilty of treason, for employing such talents in the service of foreigners. It was this inquiry which proved and published to the world the high character of Dr. Morrison, as a Chinese scholar. But, amidst a multitude of facts, the following is selected, because it exhibits his literary eminence, in combination with exalted Christian benevolence. A party of Chinese navigators, among whom was one Teal-Kung-Chaou, were, in 1829, sailing near the coast, with fourteen passengers and some property, when the majority of the crew rose, and, for the sake of the property, murdered the passengers, with the exception of one, who escaped to land. Teal-Kung-Chaou, far from being a partaker, had endeavoured to prevent the crime; but the survivor having, on reaching the shore, given information to the magistrates, the whole of the crew, including the innocent man, were arrested and con-

victed on evidence, which was, afterwards, shown to be insufficient by the law of China. The court was, however, opened for identification, which was all that remained to be done, previously to execution. Foreigners of distinction were admitted, and the prisoners being brought into court in cages, all were identified as partners in the crime, except Teal-Kung-Chaou, who, on stepping out of his cage, was eagerly embraced by the survivor of the murdered passengers, with grateful acknowledgments for saving his life, amidst the slaughter of his associates. But the Chinese, with their characteristic selfishness and apathy, made no attempt to reverse the unjust sentence passed on the innocent and meritorious man. Leang-a-fa, who had accompanied Dr. Morrison into the court, expressed his desire to do this act of justice and kindness, but could not command sufficient attention. Perceiving that there was no other hope for the injured man, Dr. Morrison stepped forward, and eloquently pleaded his cause, in Chinese, with so ample references to Chinese legal authority, as procured the release of Teal-Kung-Chaou, and obtained for the British advocate the highest compliments from the chief judge, and the applause of the whole court. The captive rescued from death presented, according to Chinese usage, a formal letter of acknowledgment to his deliverer, at whose feet he could not be prevented from performing the peculiar act of homage called, *Knocking head*, or striking the forehead nine times against the ground.

But Dr. Morrison paid the usual tax for being eminent, by enduring the envy of rivals. Even in this

country, he was grudged, by one portion of the press, the honour that was his due; but, on the continent of Europe, a formal, though abortive attempt, was made to rob him of the fair fame, which he deserved the more, as he sought it not. An English gentleman, who had received instructions from Dr. Morrison in the language, was requested, in return for some literary favours, to eulogize a certain continental professor of Chinese, at Dr. Morrison's expense. The answer must gratify every lover of justice, of Morrison, and of his country. "I cannot help regretting that you should indulge in such hostility to Dr. Morrison, concerning whom I must declare, (and I could not without the greatest baseness do otherwise,) that I agree with Sir George Staunton, in considering him as confessedly the first Chinese scholar in Europe. It is notorious in England, that he has, for years, conducted, on the part of the East India Company, a very extensive correspondence with the Chinese, in the written character; that he writes the language of China with the ease and rapidity of a native; and that the natives themselves have long since given him the title of *Le Docline Ma.* This testimony is decisive, and the position which it gives him is such, that he may regard all European squabbles about his Chinese knowledge as mere Batrachomyamachia. What Mr. Majoribanks stated in relation to a Japanese version of Morrison's Dictionary, is perfectly correct. The Japanese were so well pleased with the alphabetical arrangement of the second part, that they have availed themselves of Dutch interpretations, and convert it into their own vernacular language."

But it is as a Christian, and a missionary, that Dr. Morrison demands special notice in this history. His devout deference for the command of Christ, "to preach the Gospel to every creature," first directed the energies of his mind, and the benevolence of his heart towards China. For this, he forsook his native land, and encountered a host of difficulties on a foreign shore. The concealment to which he was at first doomed in China, and the solitary abstraction from every thing but Chinese which he wisely adopted, and the habit of continual opposition to heathenish notions and practices, which his mission enjoined upon him, gave him, in the view of strangers, an air of reserve and repulsiveness, which, however, a further acquaintance dispelled; leaving on the mind of a Christian a high admiration for benevolence upon principle. All his conduct was so wisely conciliatory, as to prove that he loved the people for whom he laboured. By the liberal course which the East India Company finally adopted towards him, he was enabled to develop a Christian superiority to the love of gain; and to prompt, by his own princely example, the liberality of others towards that one magnificent object to which he consecrated his life.

His Chinese translation of the Scriptures, to which also Dr. Milne eminently contributed, proved his fidelity in the most delicate and important charge that can be committed to a mortal, the transfusion of the revealed mind of God into the language of many millions of our race, hitherto unacquainted with the inestimable treasure. That there should be differences of opinion on the version was almost inevitable; but

it is gratifying to reflect, that, if Morrison and his coadjutor erred, it was by excess of fidelity. To biblical scholars it is known, that there are two schools of translation, which may be denominated the *close* and the *free ;* the former exemplified in the Vulgate and the Peshito Syriac; the latter, in the Latin version of Castellio, and, perhaps, also, in the French of Maitre de Saci. The close version aims, not only to impart the thoughts of the Divine Mind, but also to retain as much as possible of the very manner of the sacred writers; while the free translators endeavour to give to the sentiments the air of an original work in the language which they employ. Each school has its advocates; but antiquity and piety plead for the close version. The Septuagint translation of the Old Testament into Greek, which was first in the field, and which may plead apostolic sanction, is certainly not in the manner of a composition by native Greeks, who must always have perceived, that it was a translation from the Hebrew. The Greek Testament itself, though originally written in that tongue, bears the character of the Septuagint, rather than of Xenophon, and on this depend some of its most convincing evidences of veracity. The earliest versions by the Christian church, such as the Itala and the Syriac, derive a great part of their value from their close fidelity; and cannot but exert great authority over subsequent translators.

That the works of the inspired writers should be read by men of other nations, as productions by their own countrymen, is not desirable, if it were attainable; for this would mislead. But it is not possible; for

every page would dispel the illusion. He who made choice of one people to be the depositories and organs of revealed truth, intended that all other nations should know it. By translations which yield to this design, we not only convey the Divine Mind, in the divine manner, and thus, as far as possible, guard against any alteration in the sentiments; but we have found that we create, also, in every nation, a style of thinking and speaking on sacred subjects, which gives to its inhabitants some portion of the advantage which *they* enjoyed to whom revelation came in their native tongue. If this produces, as must be admitted, some literary disadvantages; the opposite system is liable to still more serious objections. It is, therefore, a cause of rejoicing, rather than of regret, that Dr. Morrison's Chinese version has taken the safe side in this disputed question. If it has been said, that, by being less free and idiomatic than he could have made it, the book is almost sealed and useless to the Chinese; it may be replied, that we have attempted to do what never yet has been done, and probably never will be,—to convert a nation by what might, in a good sense, be called the dead letter, rather than by the living voice. The argument of the Catholics, that the word was preached before it was written, is, though misapplied, true, and may furnish us with instructive reflections. The Bible was intended to be unfolded by the living teacher; and where the latter is wanting, in how many countries, not to mention our own towns and villages, does it lie a sealed and neglected book? That the first attempt to render a volume, so peculiar as the Bible, into a language so peculiar as the Chinese, may admit

of improvement; and that there are cases where it is difficult to decide between the free and the close version, which are often separated by a very delicate line, cannot be denied; but a late attempt at a more idiomatic version in Chinese, has led the Bible and London Missionary Societies to award the palm of preference to Dr. Morrison's translation.

The life of this missionary, honoured by usefulness beyond that of almost any other man, since the Apostles' days, was terminated by what may be called an early, and a painful death. Engaged in a hostile conflict with the Chinese, which his better judgment could not approve, he was called away from the field, just when we might have hoped he was about to reap the fruit of his toils, in the conversion of those for whom he had lived, to the faith of Christ. But He who does all things well, apportions the labours and joys of his servants by a plan too comprehensive for our grasp. The faithful missionary had made it an invariable practice to teach religion by example, as well as by discourse; and deeming the Lord's day a most important and beneficial part of the Christian institutions, he always kept it sacred, and filled it up with devotions and benevolent labours. At Canton, where he was obliged to spend the portion of the year devoted to trade, though he had only a lodging, he made this a chapel; but in his own house, at Macao, he enjoyed better opportunities of rendering his dwelling a temple for God. In both places, he usually preached four times on the Sabbath; twice in English, to such of his countrymen as would attend, and twice in Chinese, to the natives. By the latter services, several were con-

verted to Christ, and a few of them have been destined to the missionary service. His last service seemed to give a mournful presentiment of his speedy removal to that rest from which those who long for the conversion of China to the Christian faith, would have wished long to detain him.

Of his large and commanding person, which was rendered interesting by a full and piercing eye, a very just representation is in the possession of both hemispheres; for, at the request of the India Company's servants, a painting was taken by Chinnery, at Canton; and the house of the London Missionary Society, in Blomfield Street, contains a portrait, taken in this country. The habit of economising time, without which he could not have achieved his numerous works, prevented much of that social intercourse which he would otherwise have enjoyed; and, whenever conversation became unprofitable, he withdrew. With his own children, when they were young, he was very sportive; and to the enlargement of their minds, he devoted his unerring attention. As they grew up, they became his companions and correspondents, which naturally rendered them his affectionate friends. The letter, in which his eldest son announced to the Missionary Society his death, was a beautiful and touching exhibition of fine sense and filial piety. Having been himself a good son,—for he devoted a portion of his income to the comfort of his father's old age,—he was honoured by the attachment of a son, in whose arms he expired.

As usefulness was his grand aim, in pursuit of which he lent his powerful aid to the Temperance

Society, in Canton; he opened a floating chapel, for the Seamen's Friend Society, and kept a school for Chinese children in his own house, employing Chinese teachers, and giving presents to the parents, to induce them to send their offspring. His memory has been honoured in a way that he did not anticipate, but would most highly have prized; for, when it was found that his family was not so amply provided for as to justify the Missionary Society in accepting the present he had made of his Chinese library, which cost him many thousand pounds, a subscription was raised to purchase it, and an arrangement made to render it most extensively useful. The London University College accepted the grant of it, on condition of preserving it under the title of the Morrison Library, and appointing a Chinese professorship for five years. Thus our country is in some measure rescued from the disgrace of doing less than some other European nations, for the language and literature of the Chinese, in whom we, more than any other nation on the globe, have a deep interest; and Mr. Kidd, formerly a missionary of the London Society, at Malacca, is now Professor of Chinese.

Should this memoir be deemed disproportionably long, it may be justified, not only by the importance of its theme, and the influence which it is hoped Dr. Morrison will have in directing the attention of his country to the conversion of China, but also by the consideration, that this is the only record of an Independent missionary which our history contains. Morrison, therefore, must stand for a class, which contains many a name worthy to be recorded among the Congrega-

tional Dissenters, who have quitted their country, to make known our holy religion to those who are worshipping idols.

THE REV. ANDREW FULLER, OF KETTERING.

Andrew Fuller was born at Wicken, a village in Cambridgeshire, February 6, 1754, and educated at the free-school of Soham. His early days were spent in the labours of agriculture, his father being a small farmer; and the son was, at first, not remarkable for any thing but folly and vice. At the age of fourteen, he began to think seriously of religion; but as the minister whose instructions the family attended, never addressed any but believers, the youth was set on asking himself what faith could be. These reflections, however, were dismissed, till, in the midst of the sports of his vain companions, he thonght himself addressed with the question, "What dost thou here, Elijah?" which made him quit them, though with murmurs against God for disturbing his sinful pleasures. By reading religious books, he was often melted into tears; but his heart being unchanged, he returned again to his sins. At length he discovered the evils of his heart, as well as of his life, and saw that if God would give him the kingdom of heaven, on condition of forsaking sin, he should not accept it on those terms. This greatly alarmed him, and made him exclaim, "Iniquity will be my ruin." But now the apostle's words, "Sin shall not have dominion over you," came forcibly to his mind, and having been led to believe, that promises thus suddenly occurring were spoken immediately by God, he was filled with delight.

But the speedy vanishing of all his religious impressions showed him the fallacy of that fanatical notion.

For a long time after, he lived in carelessness and sin; but at length his alarms returned, and he was constantly haunted on his bed with dread of God and eternity. Filled with the false notion which prevailed among the religious people around him, that he must have some special warrant for believing, beyond the invitations of Scripture, he was compelled by his distress to fly to Christ, as appeared to him, "contrary to law," like Esther going into the presence of the Persian king. He found peace, however, and was led by these conflicts to take the course which afterwards distinguished him as a religious writer. He was publicly baptized, in his seventeenth year, and endured with meekness the scoffs of his former associates.

The pastor of the Baptist church now became his bosom friend, whose love of reflection and reading gave a happy direction to the mind of the young convert. But some exercise of church discipline having given rise to disputes concerning human ability in religion, the pastor resigned his charge, and the church was for some time without a minister. Mr. Fuller, who was much tried by that event, having been thrown into successful meditations on a text of Scripture, as he was going to a neighbouring place, was there induced to address an assembly on that theme; and thus commenced a course in which he afterwards became distinguished. The deacon of the church which he had joined, had, during their state of destitution, preached to the people; but being, one day,

prevented by an accident, Mr. Fuller supplied his place; and so unfavourable were the impressions made by his first efforts, that the deacon said, "It is of no use to try him, for he will never make a preacher." Having, however, once added to the good sense which he always exhibited, considerable fluency, and being rendered the instrument of saving benefits to some of the hearers, he, at last, accepted an invitation to become the pastor.

He was ordained in May, 1775, and Mr. Hall, of Arnsby, being one of those who took a part in the service, Mr. Fuller was introduced to the friendship of that wise and good man, who, finding how his mind was embarrassed, recommended him to read Edwards on the Freedom of the Will. But so unacquainted was Mr. Fuller with theological literature, that he procured Dr. Edwards' "Veritas Redux," and wondered that he found there no solution to his doubts. He afterwards found, by reading the works of Dr. Owen, that there was one who harmonized with Bunyan in invitations to sinners, rather than with Gill and Brine, the oracles among his Baptist friends. Thus he was led into what was called the modern question, and by reading the American divines, was induced to adopt so decidedly their views of man's obligation to obey the Gospel, that he published, in 1781, when he was but twenty-six years of age, his treatise entitled, "The Gospel Worthy of all Acceptance." Being introduced to the acquaintance of Mr. Sutcliffe, of Olney, and Dr. Ryland, of Bristol, with whom he formed a friendship for life, he drank still more deeply into their attachment for the Edwardian school of theology.

He married, in 1776, Miss Gardner, of Soham, by whom he had several children, which made it necessary for him to attempt something to add to his narrow income; for he had relinquished his secular employment, finding it incompatible with his ministerial duties: but the school which he opened did not succeed, for he was formed for a far different sphere, and was, therefore, suffering under embarrassed circumstances, when a kind Providence opened for him a field more suited to his powers. The Baptist church at Kettering, being without a pastor, was advised by Mr. Hall to invite his friend Fuller, who, on receiving the invitation, was so touched by the entreaties of his first charge, that he was twelve months before he could find resolution to leave them. At length, however, he settled at Kettering, which was thus favoured by the labours of two of the principal men of their day. With Mr. Toller, the Independent minister, Mr. Fuller formed a friendship that was never interrupted by jealousies, and was not terminated even by death.

The Baptist Mission now rose to engage the attention, and elicit the zeal of Mr. Fuller, who was, at length, said to have died a martyr to the cause. Having struggled through great difficulties, theological and pecuniary, and being now placed more at his ease, his ardent mind and devoted heart demanded just such an object to call forth his noblest powers. His pastoral charge, also, was soon rendered more easy and more efficient, by the extinction of a separation in a way most pleasant and honourable. Another Baptist church in Kettering, finding in Mr. Fuller a

pastor fitted to promote its edification, proposed a union, and was accepted, with its pastor, Mr. Satchel, who was the author of an interesting religious novel, entitled, "Thornton Abbey," to which Mr. Fuller contributed to give considerable celebrity.

Mr. Fuller, having become well-known across the Atlantic, as an able advocate of the American school of Calvinism, was announced in the periodicals of the day as honoured with a diploma of D. D., by one of the colleges of that country; but he declined the honour, questioning both the propriety of such distinctions, and his own claim to academic honours. About this time, one of his village degrees, having lost a son, Mr. Fuller went to preach his funeral sermon; but the place of worship was inadequate to the assembly convened, and, on application to the vicar, the parochial place was lent to him; nor was any episcopal censure passed on the hazardous irregularity. Mr. Pearce, the Baptist minister of Birmingham, being called to his rest, in the noon of life, and amidst the most exalted course of ministerial labour, Mr. Fuller performed the painful, but useful task of giving his memoirs to the world. The subject, and the biographer, have contributed to furnish the most valuable life that a young minister can read.

Mr. Fuller reversed the usual process of popularity; for, while the distinction of the preacher usually leads to that of the author, he was brought into notice by his writings, and thus became at last popular in the pulpit. He had, indeed, studied to supply the want of education for the ministry, by carefully reading Claude's "Essay on the Composition of a Sermon;" and

though his manner was not attractive, those who had been instructed by his books, were anxious to hear his living voice, and overlooked external defects, for the sake of the superior wisdom that was manifest in all he said, as well as in all he wrote. He wisely improved his own proper talent, without affecting what was to him unattainable. The unity of his discourses was complete, and every defect was supplied by vigorous thoughts and solid argument, which never failed to leave the desired impression on the heart. Popularity, in its most vulgar sense, was precluded by what may be deemed more massive excellences, and his own church never consisted of more than two hundred members, though his place of worship was enlarged to contain above a thousand hearers.

But that species of celebrity which he acquired, exactly fitted him to serve, most effectually, the cause to which he devoted his life: for the mission to India may be said to have been his darling child. In an association of ministers, held at Nottingham, in 1784, he preached a sermon on the nature and importance of walking by faith, which he afterwards published, with an appendix, persuading to a monthly union in prayer for the revival of religion. This struck the spark which Mr. Carey afterwards blew into a flame. In the Spring of 1791, Mr. Fuller preached at Clipston, on the pernicious influence of delays in religion, which produced a most happy and powerful effect. By these efforts he gave birth to that valuable mission which the Baptists have established in India, and which he spent his subsequent life to cherish and extend. For this purpose,

he travelled, not only over a great part of England, but also into Scotland and Ireland. As he had lived much in little time, he was, in the commencement of 1805, greatly reduced by illness, which he bore like one who was willing to suffer as well as to act for God. His dying colloquies displayed the most edifying union of deep humility, and firm reliance on the grace of Christ; so that his friend, Mr. Toller, said, in a funeral sermon he preached for him, "He died just as I could wish to die, as a penitent at the foot of the cross." He entered into his rest, on the morning of the Lord's day, May 7th, 1815, in the sixty-first year of his age.

His printed works, which are the basis of his fame, would lead some to say that controversy was his element. But while he was indeed fitted, by nature, and called by circumstances, to grapple with error, his contention was always for important truth, in the spirit of piety. His "Comparative View of the Calvinistic, and Socinian Systems, with regard to their Moral Tendencies," which made him most popular among evangelical Christians, seizes only on important points, and is not enfeebled by special pleading. His works against Sandemanianism, and the scheme of universal salvation, bear the same impressions of zeal for the "doctrines that are according to godliness." The style of all his works is simple and perspicuous, with sufficient vigour of composition to accomplish their object. They show how much more he might have done with a better education; and how much more may be done by five talents, faithfully improved, than is usually effected by ten, when they are idolized and perverted. For he

was the most distinguished blessing to his own communion, and through it, to the church of God, by giving rise, or at least prevalence, to a new school of divinity, denominated, whether by friends, or by foes, Fullerism. This diminished, if not destroyed, the excessive influence of Dr. Gill in his own communion. Others, and among the Baptists too, had attempted to stem the torrent of a distorted Calvinism which outraged Calvin, but Mr. Fuller coming into the field, fresh from secular pursuits and a discarded creed, brought with him a zeal that always contributes powerfully to attain its own end, and a simplicity that was better adapted than any literary apparatus to instruct the class with which he had to contend.

ROBERT HALL, A. M.

That the honour which the Baptists early enjoyed of seeing in their ranks, men of the highest order of intellect, has continued to follow them, this eloquent writer is a proof. He was born May 2nd, 1764, at Arnsby, a village near Leicester, where his father was the Baptist minister, well known by a useful work, entitled, "Helps to Zion's Travellers," and by his defence of the doctrine of the Trinity, in a circular letter to the Baptist churches. His son has but done him justice, in saying, that "He appeared to greatest advantage, where the faculties of most men fail them; for the natural element of his mind was greatness." One who knew them both, used to maintain, that the father was the greater man. The son, however, rose to higher distinction; though he was born to a life of pain, and was, when a child, so feeble, that he was not

expected to reach maturity. He was two years old before he could walk or speak; but the nurse who carried him about, took him into an adjoining burying ground, where, judging from his motions that he was desirous of learning the meaning of the epitaphs on the tomb stones, she taught him to read by these singular books. His tongue, once set at liberty, ran fast, so that he early acquired the reputation of a great talker. The love of books made the grave yard still his study; for he spread out his little library on the tombs in that quiet retreat, and stretching himself on the grass, lay reading till the shades of evening, by depriving him of light for his literary luxury, compelled him to retire into the house.

As he was placed, at six years of age, in a school at Wigston, six miles from Arnsby, he was soon found to be unable to walk, in consequence of the weakness and pain in his back, from which he suffered through life; and being carried by his brothers in turn, he repaid their kindness, by repeating to them the interesting passages that he had gathered from books. His father, however, finding it necessary, procured him a lodging near the school, to which he went, on Monday morning, loaded with the volumes that were to instruct, rather than amuse him between the hours of prescribed labour. The works of President Edwards were among them; and before he was nine years old, he had read the deepest work of experimental divinity, the "Treatise on Religious Affections," to which he added, the "Inquiry into the Freedom of the Will," no mean exercise for the powers of the most practised mental philosopher. To these he added,

"Butler's Analogy;" and, what is not less remarkable, he used to ascribe his premature passion for such studies to his association with a tailor, who was one of his father's flock. But the formation of Mechanics' Institutions has brought out to view the interesting fact, that there are persons in the most obscure retreats, and the humblest stations, who are successfully pursuing studies that have been deemed the exclusive prerogative of those who converse with genius and learning, in the groves of the academy, by the banks of the Isis or the Cam. Before he was ten years of age, Robert Hall had written several essays, chiefly on religion, which he read to his brothers and sisters, whom he often invited to hear him preach.

It is not surprising that, when he had reached his eleventh year, his father was informed by his schoolmaster, that he could not keep pace with this precocious scholar, for it cost half the night to prepare for the lessons of the next day. These demonstrations of talent, combined with indications of piety, induced the delighted parent to dedicate his son to the ministry; and after a short abode at Kettering, where his vanity was injuriously excited, by being called to preach, though in private, to his seniors, he was placed under the care of the Rev. John Ryland, at Northampton, the father of the venerated President of the Baptist College at Bristol. Mr. Ryland was so renowned for eccentricities, that his more unequivocal excellences have been thrown into the shade. But he is said to have taught Greek better than Latin, and mathematics more successfully than either. His pupils never forgot his explanations of ratios and proportions; and they

who had formed a part of his "living orrery," by which he introduced the elements of the solar system into the amusements of the play-ground, ever after felt how much they owed to the ingenuity and fidelity of their early instructor. During the year and a half that young Hall spent with Mr. Ryland, his emulation was excited; he improved in composition, and formed an acquaintance with abstract science, which increased his thirst for knowledge! But he attached the greatest importance to a sermon which he then heard preached by Mr. Robins, of Daventry, "in language of the most classic purity, at once impressive and delightful, which inspired a taste for chaste and elegant composition."

After spending some time at home, in reading divinity, under his father's guidance, with occasional helps from the acute village tailor, he entered the Bristol seminary, to study for the ministry, on Dr. Ward's foundation, in October, 1778, when he was in his fifteenth year. Here he enjoyed the instructions of Dr. Caleb Evans, who was president of the institution, and pastor of the Baptist church in Broadmead. The Rev. James Newton, was the classical tutor. In a letter to his father, Mr. Hall expresses the highest admiration of Dr. Evans; and the habit of early rising, which the pupil formed, would have enabled him to derive the utmost advantage from the institution; but that literary ambition seems to have predominated over more sacred aims. He received, therefore, the appropriate and necessary rebuke; for, being appointed to preach in the vestry, he suddenly stopped short, and sat down, exclaiming, "I have lost all my ideas!" A

second trial, in the following week, was followed by a similar result, on which he observed, "If this does not humble me, the devil *must* have me." But when he returned to his father's house, during the vacation, he preached at an association of ministers in Clipston, on "God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all," in a style that excited the admiration of all. His father, therefore, with the concurrence of his flock, solemnly devoted him to the ministry.

At the close of his studies in Bristol, he was sent to King's College, Aberdeen, on Dr. Ward's foundation. Here, Mr. Hall formed an attachment to a fellow student, who was afterwards celebrated as Sir James Mackintosh, and they read Greek together, so notoriously, that they were pointed at by the other students, who exclaimed, "There go Plato and Herodotus!" To Mr. Hall, Sir James ascribed all his knowledge of principles; and Mr. Hall used to say, that his college friend possessed a mind more analagous to that of Bacon, than any person of modern times. Having received an invitation to assist Dr. Evans in the pastoral care, at Bristol, Mr. Hall accepted it with much doubt and diffidence. His preaching soon excited extraordinary attention, the place of worship was often crowded to excess, not only by Dissenters, but by the most distinguished persons in Bristol, of all denominations, clergy as well as laity. The brilliancy and force of his pulpit eloquence, at this time, were scarcely more remarkable than the instructive fascinations of his private conversation. When, however, he looked back, in more mature life, on himself at twenty-one, the idol of the day, he deeply deplored his tendency

to display, and his defective exhibition of the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel. Whatever advances he may have made in learning, at Aberdeen, he seems to have made none in religion; and though he supposed he was justified in neglecting evangelical doctrines, at Bristol, because Dr. Evans dwelt abundantly on these themes, he afterwards severely condemned himself. He advanced daring speculations in private, though he never ventured on such things in the pulpit; but his best friends were alarmed for him, and, among these must be mentioned the excellent Dr. Ryland, because he wrote to him letters of faithful warning, for which, as well as for his whole character, Mr. Hall ever regarded him with profound esteem and veneration.

When about three-and-twenty years of age, he, having heard Mr. Robinson, of Cambridge, preach, was so fascinated with him, as to determine to imitate him; but Mr. Hall had too much intellectual pride to be a permanent imitator, and he soon discovered that his physical powers unfitted him for the style in which Robinson excelled. A subsequent interview between these two master spirits, effectually cured Mr. Hall of the idolatry into which he had been ensnared, and left Mr. Robinson in a position which he could ill bear—that of a defeated disputant.

But Mr. Hall was now called to endure a trial, that left an indelible impression on his mind; for a serious misunderstanding arose between him and Dr. Evans, which, for two years, destroyed the peace of both. Mediators, having become partizans, failed in their attempts at reconciliation, and Mr. Hall quitted

Bristol. But when Dr. Evans died, Mr. Hall wrote to his brother-in-law, Mr. James, of Bristol :—"It is truly affecting to recollect the friendship that so long subsisted between us, and that it should end so unhappily in a breach that admits of no repair, no remedy. Yet though I feel most pungently on this occasion, I am happy to be able to join with you in declaring, that my conscience is not loaded with guilt. But though, in justice to myself, I say thus much, there is no one more disposed to lament the deceased than myself, or who has a truer sensibility of the real virtues of his character."

Mr. Hall had given pain to his orthodox friends, and especially to the Baptists; but, in a correspondence with the church in Broadmead, he declared his firm belief in the divinity and atonement of Christ, justification by faith, and regeneration by the influences of the Holy Spirit; though he avowed himself a materialist, and, of course, denied a state of consciousness between death and the resurrection. He declared, also, that while he maintained the other sentiments of the Baptists, he could not approve of rebaptising those who had received baptism on a confession of faith, though the rite had not been administered by immersion; because he did not think that a mistake, with regard to the mode, vitiated the whole ordinance.

Mr. Robinson, of Cambridge, having died, just after preaching for Dr. Priestly, to whose views he had become a convert, Mr. Hall became, in 1790, pastor of the vacant church. This was an event most happy for both parties; for the effects of Mr. Robinson's

Socinianism on the congregation created a revulsion in Mr. Hall's mind; while the splendour of his talents, and his reputation for daring speculation, gave him an influence over them which no other man would have obtained. The death of Mr. Hall's father, in 1791, rendered the son more deeply thoughtful, brought to his remembrance some affectionate, argumentative, parental remonstrances against dangerous speculation, which led him at last to say, that he buried his materialism in his father's grave. Mr. Hall's first sermon, after taking the pastoral charge at Cambridge, was on the Atonement, which induced one of Mr. Robinson's proselytes to say to the new pastor, "This preaching will not do for us; it will only suit a congregation of old women." "Do you mean my *sermon*, sir, or the *doctrine?*" "Your *doctrine*." "Why is the doctrine fit only for old women?" "Because it may suit the musings of people tottering on the brink of the grave, and eagerly seeking comfort." "Thank you, sir, for your concession. The doctrine will not *suit* people of *any* age, unless it be true. It is not fitted for old women alone; but is equally important at every age." The objector, with three or four other persons of influence, and about twenty of the poor, withdrew, and met in a private house, under the instruction of the Rev. Mr. Frend, fellow and tutor of Jesus College, an avowed Socinian; but a few months sufficed to disperse them.

The strong political excitement created by the French revolution, divided Cambridge into parties, and one of these contrived to draw Mr. Hall into a promise, which produced his celebrated "Apology for

the Freedom of the Press," of which he said, "in an evil hour I yielded. I went home to my lodgings, and began to write immediately; sat up all night, and, wonderful for me, kept up the intellectual ferment for almost a month, and then the thing was done. I have, ever since, regretted that I wrote so hastily and superficially, on some subjects which required touching with a master hand, and exploring to their very foundation." The public, however, judged more favourably of the work, of which three editions were demanded in six months; but this failed to reconcile the author to what might be termed his maiden production.

Though Mr. Robinson had prepared for his successor a bed of thorns, Mr. Hall so conciliated the pious poor, by condescending pastoral visits, and so awed the conceited by his mental greatness, that he soon acquired that influence which is essential to usefulness. His kindness to children and servants was very touching, and his rebukes to offenders were tremendous, because they were always accompanied by some striking exhibition of moral truth. The cheerfulness of his temper, and the innocent hilarity of his wit, rendered his company delightful; and while his conversation was chiefly doctrinal among strangers, he entered most feelingly into experimental subjects with his more intimate friends. He used to say, that he visited the poor widows of his church to learn religion; when, to repay them for the expense of his favourite meal, he carried with him a superabundant quantity of tea and sugar.

While at Cambridge, he gave himself that new

education, which neither Bristol, nor Aberdeen, had rendered unnecessary. He went through the Greek and Latin classics, the writings of the Fathers and Reformers, with the most esteemed French preachers. For this he set apart six hours a day, but often took eight or ten, and relieved his fatigue by change of subject every two hours. These efforts were sustained amidst the severe pains to which he was subject through life. He revived and increased his knowledge of mathematics, by the aid of his friend Dr. Gregory, in such a spirit as to instruct his instructor, and subsequently to excite the admiration of Dr. Hutton.

As his religion advanced, and his ministry improved, his congregation increased, till it became necessary to enlarge the place of worship. Early in the year 1799, a severe fever contributed to promote at once his spirituality and orthodoxy; for after maintaining the necessity of divine influence, without admitting the distinct personality of the Holy Spirit, he was brought, by experience, to adopt this truth. It was productive of the happiest effects on his character and preaching, and may be regarded as the origin of his best fame, which now reached its zenith: for the publication of his sermon against Modern Infidelity, brought into the ranks of his admirers a host of persons who were unwilling to admit the merits of his Apology for the Freedom of the Press. He paid, however, the usual price for his celebrity, in the attacks he endured from Mr. Benjamin Flower, and others.

About this time, Sir James Mackintosh renewed his intercourse with his old fellow-student, and Dr. Parr, coming to Cambridge, to enjoy their society, Mr. Hall

learned from him the art of smoking tobacco, which he had previously condemned, but now adopted for life, finding it, perhaps, soothing to the pain which he constantly suffered. Dr. Parr was among the loudest in praise of the sermon on Modern Infidelity; but the panegyric in the notes to the Spital sermon offended Mr. Hall's modesty, and drew forth the epithet, "insane!" Now the universal admiration which the sermon attracted, induced so many members of the University to attend Mr. Hall's ministry, that it began to create alarm, and a serious attempt was made to allure the dissenting Demosthenes into the Established Church. His celebrity was increased by the publication of a sermon on the Peace of Amiens, and especially by one entitled, "Sentiments proper to the present Crisis," of which the last ten pages were thought, by Mr. Pitt, to be "equal in eloquence to any passage of the same length that can be selected from either ancient or modern writers."

But as he increasingly disliked Cambridge, he withdrew to an adjoining village, and there so devoted himself to study, that he lost his reason, and was placed under the care of Dr. Arnold, of Leicester, who had the pleasure of seeing him recover in about two months. During this interval, his flock generously procured for him a life annuity, and gave other proofs of ardent affection. In about twelve months, his malady returned, and he was removed to the Fish Ponds, near Bristol, under the judicious care of Dr. Cox, which again restored him. Change of scene being deemed necessary, he resigned his charge, and, after an interval, accepted an invitation to become pastor

to the congregation at Leicester, which Dr. Carey had quitted, to embark in the mission at Serampore. In his new sphere, Mr. Hall continued twenty years, to the great enlargement of the flock, which, from two or three hundred, rose to about a thousand. For Mr. Hall's religious character was so much improved by his afflictions, that he deemed them the means of his *first* acquaintance with the genuine religion of the heart. From this time, he was regarded as the champion of evangelical truth, both in the pulpit and in the press. His sermon on the Death of the Princess Charlotte extorted universal admiration, and the Treatise on Terms of Communion against the Strict Communion of the Baptists, contributed powerfully to dispose that body to receive Pædobaptists into church fellowship.

The death of Dr. Ryland, of Bristol, led to Mr. Hall's removal to that place, in 1826, when he was sixty-two years of age. He felt acutely his separation from a beloved flock; but went where he believed duty called him. He was in his element at Bristol, and was successful in his ministry; but was followed by his painful complaint, that made it necessary to increase the quantity of laudanum, to which, for a long time, he had had recourse. He pursued his studies, however, without relaxation, reading the works of President Edwards, and of Chillingworth, whom he used to pronounce more interesting than a novel writer. When he wished to study a subject that required the knowledge of a new language, he ventured on the task, and thus acquired Italian, for the sake of reading Dante. The works of Jeremy Bentham he

praised extravagantly, and affirmed that, with these in his hand, he could go from state to state, with as firm a step as though he walked on a pavement of adamant. Of poets, he admired scarcely any but Milton among the English; and it is scarcely necessary to say, that for him, Mr. Hall's admiration approached to idolatry. But as he advanced towards the close of life, he devoted himself greatly to the Hebrew Bible and Greek Testament, and to Matthew Henry's Commentaries, which he valued as the perfection of works of this class. He was disappointed if he did not spend his morning in study, and his evenings in pastoral duties, or the society of friends. With persons of eminence he blazed up; but, at last, cared for little but piety; and when that was present, if any complained that the evening had been dull, he said, "I don't think so. It was very pleasant. I enjoyed it. I enjoy every thing." What a triumph of religion over incessant pain! For more than twenty years he had not been able to pass a night without rising, through excessive anguish, and throwing himself on the ground, or on two or three chairs, to find relief.

In the year 1830, he was obliged to go to Cheltenham, in search of relief for an additional complaint in the heart; and though he returned somewhat relieved, he soon became worse. The last service in which he engaged was at a church meeting, on the 9th of February, 1831, when his closing prayer spoke a soul on the verge of the heavenly world. On the morning of the following Lord's day, he was found in extreme distress. The pain in his back had compelled him to take a hundred and twenty grains of opium. He spoke,

however, of little else but the unspeakable mercies of God, and the incessant kindness of friends. His last moments were as edifying to the humble Christian, as his most splendid eloquence had been delightful to men of taste and genius. When asked if he were comfortable, he replied "Very comfortable; come, Lord Jesus, come"—and then, his voice failing, his daughter involuntarily added—"quickly;" and he gave her a look of most complacent delight. Thus he died, in February, 1831, in the sixty-seventh year of his age.

Few men have furnished to the church more instructive warning, or more beneficial stimulus than Mr. Hall. For his ministry began with splendid faults, and closed with distinguished excellence. If we adopt his own views of himself, we must consider him as adding another to the numerous monitions against suffering the sons of ministers to adopt their father's profession, before they have given satisfactory evidence of being renewed by divine grace, and called of God into the ministry. The system which prevails in the Establishment best secures learning; but departure from the practice of the Dissenters endangers the higher interests of religion. In Mr. Hall's conviction, that his real piety commenced after his first mental affliction, we are disposed to acquiesce, as well as in some other of his opinions concerning himself. For in his coolest and most serious moments, his judgment was sound and much to be preferred to that of his extravagant eulogists.

To his want of real religion may be traced the early faults of his ministry, which were calculated to do immense injury to the church of God. The blaze of

talent, the splendour of oratory, the ambition of assuming a high rank among the literati of the day, are not the things for which the Redeemer designed ministers to be distinguished. The pulpit was not erected in the church to be the pedestal of literary or oratorical fame; nor will it be converted to that use, by those who are eminently endued with the true spirit of the sacred calling. The amalgamation of the schools of philosophy with the church of Christ, which began at Alexandria, and has long reigned in England, has been the bane of religion, which will always be more heathenised by this association, than learning will be Christianised. Let languages, and science, and the fine arts be cultivated to the highest degree, and the widest extent; but let them, like commerce, or agriculture, or politics, keep to their own province, while religion reigns with undivided sway in the church. Learning will then be most useful, and least injurious to the Gospel. All the aids which literature or science can afford, will find their way into the church, while the substitution of learning for religion is excluded.

The overruling providence of God, doubtless, elicited good, to men of taste, from Mr. Hall's early faults; but it was the excellence of the latter period of his life, that effected the good to which the ministry should directly tend. It was not when he was enamoured of Plato, Demosthenes, or Cicero, but when he gave his mornings to his Bible and Matthew Henry, that Mr. Hall made full proof of his ministry. By catching the instructive simplicity, and scriptural piety of Henry, which appeared true wisdom to Hall, when he was

himself devoutly wise, the once splendid orator charmed and edified the humble Christian, whom he had before dazzled and alarmed. Had the modesty of his better days permitted him to give us his Autobiography, it would have been one of the most useful works the church of God could possess.

The humble estimate he formed of himself and his own works, was not mere self-depreciation, but the sentence of sound wisdom. For he was distinguished for taste rather than genius; and excelled in the power of adorning, but not of eliciting truth. Nothing like discovery in mental, moral, or theological science is to be found in his works, nor any remarkable proof of intellectual vigour in the highest sense. Some of his most splendid passages are imitations, though plagiarisms they cannot be called; because he so transmuted, and adorned, and improved what he borrowed, as to give him a right to call it his own. His exquisite sensibility to the sublime and beautiful in composition, induced a lofty ambition to excel, which rendered his preparations for the press most laborious, but left him, after all, sincerely dissatisfied with the result; and offended, rather than gratified, by the extravagant praise, which his better judgment told him was not true. He wrought into his sentences the trains of thought which led others, as well as himself, to his own conclusions; but which strike the reader as new, because he does not perceive them in the writings of those who are less ambitious of obtaining the approbation of cultivated minds. As a preacher to the literati, he stood alone; but this class of hearers is small, and is usually too conceited to be edified.

Consciousness of the true character of his mind, led to the miscellaneous and fugitive nature of Mr. Hall's works : for, had he attempted a treatise on any great and difficult theme, it would have demonstrated that he was not formed to extricate truth from the involutions that have embarrassed even lofty minds ; but was the painter, or the poet, rather than the architect of moral and religious science. When brought into a happier state of mind, he abandoned the errors of his youth, with an ease that showed he had not been entangled by reasonings of any peculiar force, but had been superficially acquainted with the evidence which had long afforded to others the satisfaction that he at last felt. His writings, therefore, are not destined, like those of Edwards, whom he admired, or Owen, whom he despised, to instruct posterity; but if they are not suffered to lie on the shelf neglected, they will be taken down to rub off the rust, contracted by dealing largely in the compositions of those who valued thoughts as the sons of heaven, and despised words as the daughters of earth. Thus employed, the compositions of Robert Hall are of high value, and will accomplish a useful end. For while he shows what an air of originality may be given to sentiments that are liable to be despised, only because they are old; he affords one encouraging proof, that religion may be made attractive, not only to the young and sentimental, but even to the literary and philosophical,—the giants of the mental world.

Such rarities are, however, fraught with as much danger to the Christian, as benefit to the world. To the communion of which he was a bright ornament,

Mr. Hall's example would be pernicious, if it led to imitation; for, whatever admiration may be extorted by his printed compositions, it is not in this style that the Gospel should be preached. The rude simplicity of their Bunyan, would secure to the Baptists more effectually the highest honours of usefulness, than the elaborate eloquence of their Hall.

He was, however, an instructive and delightful example of the triumphs of religion over the most dangerous temptations to which the human mind can be exposed. Here the Gospel, accompanied by the rod of affliction, in a father's hand, was seen "divinely mighty to storm strong holds, bringing down high things, and leading every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ." From that which he regarded as the date of his conversion, his faults disappear, and Christian excellence of the highest order takes their place. He that had made Ryland and Fuller tremble for him, won, at last, their esteem and confidence, and reached that point of true elevation,—Christian simplicity and lowliness,—to which, in his Icarian flights, he seemed to look down as too flat for his superior genius. While the sufferings of his life extort our sympathy, and his patient endurance our admiration, we cannot doubt that he was saved from murmuring, by a consciousness that a discipline so severe, was chosen by infinite wisdom and mercy, as necessary to save him from the pride of intellect and the path of error. Thus he was brought to consecrate the ample treasures, which his vigorous mind had accumulated by the labour of years, to the honour of the cross; and to end, as he should have begun, by saying, "I have deter-

mined to know nothing among men, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."

WM. CAREY, LL.D., MISSIONARY IN INDIA.

This eminent servant of Christ was born at Paulersbury, in Northamptonshire, August 17, 1761. His father was a schoolmaster, who gave him a tolerably good education, but he was called to work for his bread in an humble trade. Like many others who have eminently served the church of God, he was very early impressed with the importance of religion, though his circumstances in life were unfavourable to this great concern. Being apprenticed to a shoemaker, his master was one of those churchmen who can indulge in intoxication, and employ their servants in business on the Lord's day, while strenuously contending for the superiority of their church over every other. But a fellow-servant, who was a dissenter, first awakened young Carey's attention to religion; though his bigotry and his pride resisted all thoughts of quitting his church. Becoming deeply anxious about his salvation, he now sought relief to his wounded conscience by attending three churches on the Lord's day, and a dissenter's service in addition. At length, by hearing a sermon on the words of the Apostle. "Let us go forth to him without the camp, bearing his reproach," he determined to quit the establishment, and become a dissenter; because he concluded that the Establishment was the camp designed to ward off the reproach of Christ. This curious reason for dissent would neither have been discovered nor obeyed, if he had not derived that impression from the dissenting minis-

try which disposed him to interpret every thing in its favour. But his own subsequent reflection on the subject shows, that he had no powerful influence operating on the other side; for he says, "I was brought off from a carnal, lifeless ministry."

Having taken his lot among dissenters, he was naturally introduced to an acquaintance with their religious writers, and "Hall's help to Zion's Travellers" was put into his hands, which, being the first book of scriptural divinity he had read, opened a new train of thinking, that set his powerful mind at work, and gave him great delight. He was now induced to join the Baptist church, and was ever after a zealous advocate of their views. The evidence of ability that he early gave, induced his new friends to invite him to preach, which he did, but, as he afterwards thought, most wretchedly; though this severe sentence was perhaps the result of that excessive depreciation of himself, which he often betrayed when he had risen to eminence and usefulness almost unrivalled. He took the charge of a small flock at Moulton, where he was compelled to keep a school for his support; but his worth unfolding there, procured him an invitation to Leicester, that afforded a better field both for usefulness and support. Having married, however, and being soon surrounded with a family, he still had to struggle with poverty.

His mind had dwelt on the claims of the heathen, when he was thrown, at a meeting of dissenting ministers, into the company of Mr. Ryland, who, asking for a subject of discussion, Mr. Carey proposed, "The duty of Christians to spread the Gospel among the heathen."

But the proposal was repelled by Mr. Ryland as enthusiastic; for he, more enthusiastically, maintained that the conversion of the heathen was impossible, till God should restore the gift of tongues to the church. Mr. Carey, however, pursued his object with his characteristic perseverance, and published a pamphlet on the Duty of Christians to attempt the Conversion of the Heathen. He succeeded, at length, in obtaining a meeting for prayer for the divine direction and blessing on the great project; for which, in 1784, a collection was made, amounting to the sum of 13*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.*, which must make those who are familiar with the present contributions to missions, smile or weep. But the Baptist Church at Birmingham, by the hallowed influence of Mr. Pearce, soon gave a pledge of nobler things, by a contribution of a hundred pounds.

Mr. Carey now showed under what influence he had urged others to the attempt, by offering himself as their first missionary. He had early displayed a talent for acquiring languages; for a trivial circumstance had induced him to learn Dutch, and thus he obtained evidence that his zeal was not blind, but that He who had given him the heart of a missionary had furnished him with at least one of the requisite qualifications. His flock at Leicester wisely consented to part with him, and were rewarded for their sacrifice by subsequent prosperity, and the ministry of such a man as Mr. Robert Hall; so that the congregation was greatly increased, even after another society had branched off from the parent stock. He was also encouraged by the unexpected offer of a companion, Mr. Thomas, who had been a surgeon in India, and therefore knew

the country in which it was determined to make the first effort. But all was not smooth and encouraging; for Mr. Carey's wife refused to go, and though he reflected, that many men, in the army and navy, and civil service of the East India Company, leave their wives and families, for an object far inferior to missions; he was afraid lest, incurring the censure of professed Christians, who were shielding their lukewarmness under specious objections, he should bring discredit on the cause so dear to his heart. He determined, however, to go, if she who should have been his companion and helper persisted in her resolution to stay at home.

From the first ship in which Messrs. Carey and Thomas embarked, they were compelled, by the jealousy of the East India Company, to return; but in the anguish of their disappointment, they were relieved by the news of a Danish ship passing our coast, on its way to India. In this they not only obtained a cheap passage, but had the pleasure of receiving Mrs. Carey, who, in the interval between quitting the English vessel and the arrival of the Danish Indiaman, had been induced to alter her resolution, and to accompany her husband. The captain treated them, on the voyage, as a father and friend, and Mr. Thomas availed himself of his prior advantages, by making some progress in the language of the people whom they designed to teach. They arrived in Calcutta, November 11, 1793; but as the preparation for their voyage was fraught with difficulties which terminated in singular comforts; their first arrival in the field of missions was most discouraging, and the latter days of Carey were crowned with honour and success.

Mr. Thomas had been, for some time, a source of trial to his companion; for while the latter was prudent, economical, and self-denying; he trusted to Mr. Thomas's knowledge of the country, which seemed to answer no other end but to bring them into difficulties. But a mental derangement, at last, explained the mystery, and proved the wisdom of Mr. Carey's decision, that Mr. Thomas's heart was right, amidst all the strangeness of conduct which drew upon him the censures of the Society at home. Mr. Carey was ultimately relieved of all his pecuniary difficulties, by being appointed to the management of some indigo works; which, however, created dissatisfaction among those who had not prevented the necessity for it, by liberally supporting the mission. But, at that time, these affairs were not so well understood as they are after large and long experience; nor had Christians then learned their duty with regard to giving, of which we have, indeed, even now, acquired only the rudiments. Mr. Carey made his labours in temporal affairs a source of revenue to his mission, which would not have been suffered to continue, had he not acquired civil and commercial influence. He nobly resolved to send word to the Society, at home, that he needed no more supplies from them, which could hardly have been justified, had not new missions been projected.

The vigour with which he applied himself to the acquisition of the language of the country, and to the translation of the Scriptures, was all that might have been expected from one who had so triumphantly struggled with the difficulties that opposed his entrance on the field. The work was new, not only to him, but

unhappily to the Christian church, and he had to devise the means of conveying spiritual instruction, in a language which had no religious terms that had not been desecrated and perverted by idolatry. But, within two years from his arrival, he had translated Genesis and Exodus, and had so employed himself in preaching, that he could say, "the name of Jesus Christ is no longer strange in this neighbourhood; and I can contrive to preach an hour to the people in their own language." He wrote to Mr. Pearce, whose heart burned to join in the work, "I know not how to advise you; for you would be two years before you could with profit preach, and then it is not like preaching at home." Mr. Pearce, indeed, yielding to the intreaties of his flock, had referred the decision to others, who determined that he ought to remain at home. They robbed India, without enriching England; for this choice spirit soon fled to the skies. Mr. Carey was, however, joined by Mr. Fountain, and some others, and in December, 1795, he wrote to his friends at home, that a Baptist church was formed in India, for some effects were produced by the preaching of the Gospel. In the following year, their translation of the Scriptures was complete, and, in 1800, they were engaged in printing it, while, he said, "our brethren are now able to stand on their own legs, in preaching the word to the natives in their own tongue." His heart was gladdened by receiving sixteen members into the church, which he deemed an abundant reward for all his previous pains and toils.

His character having been tried for some years, began to be duly appreciated, and he who had been

compelled to take refuge in the Danish territory, and avail himself of the protection generously afforded by a foreign flag, was, in 1801, sought for, and requested to become Professor of Bengalee, in the College of Fort William; so that, when the neighbouring settlement of Serampore was taken from the Danes, in the middle of the night, the mission remained undisturbed. For now a grand change had come over the public mind, not only with regard to Mr. Carey, but concerning Christian missions in general; so that what was at first denounced as a crime, is at last honoured as a meritorious duty. Mr. Carey's health continued good, amidst his numerous labours, to which his professorship made an onerous but useful addition, and, in 1801, he had outlived four of the missionaries who went out to his aid.

The British and Foreign Bible Society having begun to afford essential aids to missions, took the translations of the Scriptures under its patronage, and contributed liberally to the expense of printing them. The Baptist Mission, therefore, enlarged its schemes, and projected printed versions, in the following eastern tongues: Sanscrit, Bengalee, Hindustanee, Mahratta, Oarea, Telinga, Kurnata, Guzzeratti, Persian, Boutan, Thibet, Assam, Burman, Chinese, and Malay. To the first language on this long list, Mr. Carey had paid such attention, as the parent of the eastern dialects, that he delivered before Lord Wellesley, the Governor General, the first Sanscrit speech ever made by a European. It was translated and sent to Lord Wellesley, who returned it with these words, "I am much pleased with Mr. Carey's truly original and

excellent speech. I would not wish to have a word altered. I esteem such a testimony from such a man, a greater honour than the applause of courts and parliaments." What a change, from the time when Carey was sent ashore from the British East Indiaman, in England, and was compelled to flee into the Danish territory in India!

But honours which Mr. Carey valued more highly, were awarded to him from above; for, in 1808, he wrote thus to his friends, at home. "God has given me the honour of seeing my son Felix attempt a new mission; an appropriate recompense to the father, who had resolved to leave wife and children for the sake of Christ's kingdom; and to the son, who had determined to accompany his father, when the mother had refused to go with them. There were, at length, attached to their mission, twelve churches, and their Eastern versions of the scriptures, multiplied to forty. But troubles arose; for though the damage done by a devastating fire in their printing office, was repaired by the liberality, not only of the Baptists, but of various denominations of Christians at home; a painful division arose between the missionaries in India, and the Baptist Missionary Society. It was a question of property; the society thinking that what was acquired by its missionaries, should be regarded as its own, and the missionaries judging that it should be theirs, as a body, for the use of that mission. The Baptist denomination was divided on the question; some of the most zealous friends of the society taking part with the missionaries, whom others severely censured. The pen, as well as the tongue, was largely occupied with

this strife among brethren; which ended in the missionaries, with the property, being separated from the society. The motives of both parties were good, and they were too many miles apart to admit of that friendly conference that might have prevented a separation so much to be deprecated. The breach is now healed.

Mr. Carey received, in 1823, a fall, which created serious alarm, and perhaps accelerated his end; though he so far recovered that he wrote, on the 17th of May, 1831, "I am this day seventy years of age, a monument of divine mercy and goodness." But though he had suffered little from the climate of India; his dysentery, which he had brought with him from England, frequently afflicted him; he had been in labours more abundant, and would, in his native land, have felt their effects when past seventy. He was, therefore, observed to become feeble, and after frequent painful attacks, he entered into his rest and reward, June 9, 1834.

Dr. Carey furnishes a study for mankind at large, and especially for the Christian church. Like another great man, of a different order, Newton, he disclaimed all pretensions to superior talent; for he once said to his biographer, "If you say any thing of me, you must say I was a plodder; for I am nothing else." Nothing brilliant seemed to belong to him; but he was sterling gold, kept so continually in action, that it at last shone with splendour most intense. If he was a mere plodder, what may not plodders do! But he certainly gave early proofs of one peculiar talent, that of aptitude for the acquisition of languages; which, though not of the highest order, is, to a missionary, of

first rate importance. It is that by which the Redeemer now supplies the place of the gift of tongues, with which his wisdom endued the apostles, the first Christian missionaries. This faculty has the power of multiplying itself, so that every fresh acquisition makes another more easy.

But Carey proved, by facts, that he possessed the faculty of acquiring science, as well as languages; for he took with him to India a taste for botany, which there so much increased, that he became distinguished in that paradisaic department of knowledge. If any suppose that this must have interfered with his proper business, as a missionary, his works might be left to defend him; but there is good reason to conclude that botany, by leading him on to horticulture, contributed to the preservation of his health, by saving him from the ruinous consequences of a life too sedentary. The distinction which procured him the honour of being associated with scientific societies, contributed also to give publicity to missions, in those classes which, though lamentably ignorant of what the church of Christ is doing for the benefit of mankind, are, when awakened to the subject, sometimes generous contributors to the expense.

The Christian character of Dr. Carey is now his blessed inheritance, and should be studied by those who would obey the voice that says, "Where there is any virtue, or any praise, think of these things." From the hour of his conversion to Christ, the obscure village artizan displayed that conscientious decision of soul which promises all that is excellent in character, and all that is great in achievement. He followed,

with firm step, wherever conscience led. Whatever may be thought of his interpretation of the text which made him a Dissenter, the spirit with which he took that step augured favourably, and the ultimate consequence verified the Redeemer's words, "There is no man that forsaketh father, or mother, or houses, or lands, for my sake and the Gospel's, but shall receive a hundred fold more in the present life." The same may be said of his braving pecuniary difficulties, and resolving to leave his wife, at the commencement of his mission. For the gentleness of his spirit, when severely tried by Mr. Thomas, his colleague, shows that his was firmness, not obstinacy; not indifference to the feelings of others, but an overwhelming sense of the divine authority, and deference to acknowledged duty. The distinction in society, the exemption from pecuniary embarrassments, and, above all, the usefulness ultimately conferred on such a man, furnish a moral lesson of incalculable value to mankind.

His religious experience, however, was not what some would have expected. His most private and confidential communications disclose no raptures, but often express such a sense of unworthiness, that against one of his humblest confessions his friend, Dr. Ryland, wrote "Wild humility." His motives were too pure to suffer him to be satisfied with the applause of men, and his sense of the divine character and claims, was too deep to leave any thing but humility, on a review of his best performances. Whatever of morbid excess there may have been in his self-condemnation, was doubtless overruled for good, by keeping alive in his ministry the boldest exhibition of human depravity

and sovereign grace. It must, however, not be forgotten, that to push labour, whether civil or sacred, to the utmost extent of ability, and yet maintain devotion in all its delicacies and delights, is the most difficult task with which the human mind can contend, and this Dr. Carey constantly attempted.

His improvement of time, therefore, scarcely requires to be mentioned. Apart from preaching and the pastoral care, his translations stand as a perennial monument of diligent labour, while his professorship, and his literary publications would have been deemed sufficient employment for any other man. His Sanscrit grammar was a quarto volume of a thousand pages, and his Bengalee Dictionary was on a similar scale, though he found time for other works which lie beyond the province of this history, Such was the founder of the Baptist Mission in India.

LINDLEY MURRAY.

The Society of Friends, has, in this distinguished man, enjoyed the honour, to them rather rare, of adding to the useful writers who have advanced the literature of our country. Lindley Murray was born in Pensylvania, in 1745, of parents whose attachment to the principles of the Quakers was accompanied with a high veneration for the sacred Scriptures, which they read daily in the family. The deep impression that the father received from this exercise, produced a correspondent effect on the son, who, towards the close of life, published a serious persuasive to the daily reading of the Scriptures. His frame was so weak in his earliest childhood, that his mother would have wel-

comed his removal to another world, as a relief; but as he grew older, he became not only strong, but excessively sportive and adventurous.

His early infirmities led, it seems, to excessive parental indulgence, from the bad effects of which he was, in a great measure, recovered by the judicious firmness of an aunt, to whom he was much indebted for subduing his wayward disposition. When his father determined to place him in his own counting-house, Lindley showed extreme aversion to business; and being chastised for some disobedience, at the age of fourteen, he fled from home, with a little property which he had acquired, and adopted the strange plan for a runaway youth, of placing himself at a remote seminary to pursue learning, intending, by the acquisition of French, to fit himself for making his way in the world. A singular occurrence inducing him to return to New York, where his parents lived, he was discovered, and persuaded to return to their roof. His father finding he had gone too far in restraints, now favoured his studies, and at last yielded to the son's wish to give himself to the legal profession. After studying four years, he was called to the bar, and acquired considerable reputation, which encouraged him to marry an estimable woman, the companion and friend of all his future days.

But the American revolution deranging all ordinary business, he retired into the country, to whose sports he gave himself up, much to the regret of the good man in more mature age. At length, he returned to New York, while it was in the possession of the British troops, and entered into trade, which proved so lucrative

that he soon made a fortune sufficient to induce one of his moderate views to abandon all further pursuit of gain, and live upon his income. His father had visited England in quest of health, bringing with him his wife, which induced the son also to come here, but they returned again to America. A serious illness determined Lindley Murray to settle finally in this country, in 1784, when he took a residence at Holdgate, near York, where he resided during the remainder of his days.

For a short time, his health allowed him to go about, and he attended the Quakers' meeting-house where he gave exhortations, and was chosen a minister. But his infirmities increasing, he was confined to his house for many years. He found alleviations to his affliction, in attempts to do good; for literary composition was to him a species of medicine, by diverting his attention from his complaints. He published, in 1795, his Grammar, which became very celebrated, and went through a great many editions. This was followed by Exercises, and a Key, and other school books, that brought him into notice. In 1812, he printed a Selection from Horne on the Psalms, which was his constant companion. In his seventieth year, he attempted to serve the youth of his own communion, by publishing "A Compendium of Faith and Practice;" which was followed, in 1817, by a hortatory volume on the duty and benefit of the daily reading of the Scriptures. His "Reader," both French and English, consisting of extracts from the best writers in these languages, had been previously given to the public. The popularity of his works was so great that they produced large sums,

which he devoted to charitable uses, being extremely moderate in his own expenses, and, on principle, opposed to the accumulation of wealth. His house was frequently visited by those who had been attracted by the fame of his writings, some of whom published enchanting accounts of their interviews with the literary Friend.

His course of suffering, of labour, and benevolence, terminated on the 16th of February, 1826, when he was in his eighty-first year. His will spoke the benevolence of his heart; for it contained a bequest to the Bible Society, to which he had been a great friend during life; and, after his wife's death, his whole property was given to liberate and assist enslaved blacks in America. His faith in the Redeemer was attested in many of his works, and he was accustomed to ascribe his preservation from scepticism, when a wild youth, to his having early read the principal writers on the evidences of Christianity, observing, that youth was too often exposed to injury from the conversation of infidels, in consequence of being sent out into the world unfurnished with the knowledge which parents should impart.

RICHARD REYNOLDS.

In this benevolent man the Society of Friends enjoys the honour of exhibiting a most impressive example of religion overcoming the dangers of wealth, and converting it to a blessing both to the possessor and to the world. Richard Reynolds was a native of Bristol, which has been singularly happy in some of its richest citizens. He was born about the year

1735, and was apprenticed to Mr. W. Fry, a grocer, though his fortune was gained in a very different line. The change in his pursuits was probably the consequence of marrying Hannah, the daughter of Abraham Darby, of Colebrook Dale; for Mr. Reynolds spent the middle of life there, in the iron works, which have made that part of the country so well known. He rose, by wisdom, and industry, and integrity, to the head of that branch of our most important manufactures. Competition had not, at that time, reduced, as it has since done, the profits of the iron trade, and Richard Reynolds never indulged in schemes which often end in splendid ruin; so that when old age came on he found himself in possession of a large fortune.

He retired to his native city, when nearly seventy years of age, not to spend the fruits of his labour on himself, or to hoard them for his children, but to scatter them abroad in blessings on the poor. Adhering strictly to the simple habits of his own communion, and seeking his pleasures in religion, he seldom went abroad, though he preserved his health by much walking, and promoted his own happiness by busying himself in promoting that of others. For his charities, which were more than princely, were not indiscriminate, as he deemed himself responsible to the Supreme Giver for the manner in which he gave away. Far from restricting his bounty to his own religious communion, he was most liberal where there could be least suspicion of sectarian bias. He condemned the notion that charity could be left to be exercised by our executors; for he was accustomed to say, "We must be judged according to the deeds done in the body, and the good

we do by our will does not come under that denomination."

To the Infirmary, at Bristol, and other kindred institutions, he gave with a liberality that surprised almost as much as it delighted; and to those who needed such help, he lent considerable sums, leaving them to pay according to their convenience. When the British and Foreign Bible Society presented to him a grand object, consistent with his principles, though beyond the bounds of his own communion, he came forward with such contributions as cherished most effectually the rising institution, and proved that he was glad to promote the spiritual, as well as temporal, interests of men of every creed and every clime. He was deeply interested in the improvement of prison discipline, and contributed largely to the relief of those who had been, by misfortunes, brought into jail.

In these works of benevolence he spent his latter days, not only teaching others by his example, that he deemed it "more blessed to give than to receive," but, by argument, urging many to share with him in the bliss. Though there was no poetry in the constitution of his mind, he became, by force of benevolence, eloquent, and even imaginative, in his appeals to the rich; and said to one, "When gold encircles the heart, it contracts to such a degree, that no good can issue from it; but when the pure gold of faith and love gets into it, it expands, so that the last drop of life-blood will be poured forth in benevolence." He gave away about ten thousand pounds annually, and one year, nearly twenty thousand. He once wrote to a

friend, to say, that, not having given away his income for that year, he should be glad to be informed of suitable objects of benevolence. In this way he distributed two hundred thousand pounds. But he used to say, that his was the meanest of talents; and when a mother told him she would teach her child to lisp his name, he told her to teach him a better name, observing, "That we do not praise the clouds for pouring down rain, but ascribe the glory to the Giver of all Good."

To fourscore years, he pursued this noble course, with uninterrupted health, and cheerfulness, and vigour; but, in the spring of 1816, his friends were alarmed by appearances of decay. He began to complain of weakness and loss of appetite, and after recovering from a cold, he was attacked by a bilious complaint, and was advised to go to Cheltenham. There he seemed to rally, and resumed his usual exercise, but soon relapsed, and took to his bed, to which he had not been confined, for one day, during many years. His mind was calm, and his spirit and conversation soothed and cheered all around him; for he had written to a friend, during his illness, "I have done with the world, and my hope rests on the mercy of God through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ." In this spirit he departed, on the 10th of September, 1816, in the eighty-first year of his age.

His death created such a sensation in Bristol, that no funeral of monarchs was ever adorned with such pomp as that which accompanied him to "the house appointed for all living." Instead of attendant nobles, his corpse was followed by long lines of the poor, who

blessed his memory; and ministers, as well as private Christians of every denomination, pressed forward to do honour to him who had done good to all. A society was formed under the name of the Reynolds' Commemoration, to give him, by imitation, the highest praise which excellence can receive; and to supply, by the union of many, the loss sustained by the removal of one. But this combination did little more than show his single superiority to all.

While the Christian character, and holy motives of Richard Reynolds, set the stamp of real value on his charities; they serve to show to the church, and to the world, what would be the effect of obedience to the Divine command, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth." The duty of giving away all beyond what is required for our real wants, is manifestly not understood, or, if understood, not practised even by those who profess to live under the influence of Christian principles; for one man has, by doing this, created an era in a city that contains others as rich as he. He has thus left to his children a better inheritance than they could have derived from the sums which others would have accumulated on earth, but which he laid up in heaven, "where neither moth nor rust corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal."

THE REV. MATTHEW WILKS, OF LONDON.

This most distinguished man among the Calvinistic Methodists, will be best introduced to the reader by his own words. "I was born at Gibraltar, on St. Matthew's day, 1746; an incident that originates my own Christian name, and the names of all the succeeding

children of my dear father. To me it is far more interesting to state, that early in the year 1771, I was born of God, under the preaching of the Rev. W. Percy, at West Bromwich, Staffordshire. This was an event of infinitely greater importance to myself, and many others, than my birth. From that period my religious character became fixed, and I partook the consolations which real Christianity inspires. My spiritual father was so much attached to me, that nothing short of my becoming a minister would satisfy him. To the Countess of Huntingdon's college, at Trevecca, I *must* and *should* go; and, though against my inclination, I went; and, being entered, closely pursued my studies. Other important results attended the formation of my Christian character. While I was at college, Robert Keine, Esq., one of the managers of the London Tabernacle and Tottenham Court chapel, paid Lady Huntingdon a visit in Wales. He heard me, one Sunday, in the chapel, and said he should be glad to hear me in their places in London." The decision of his character may be seen by this sketch; and those who knew him in the vicinity of Birmingham and West Bromwich, bore testimony to the ardour with which he espoused the cause of religion, and laboured to extend its influence, from the moment that he felt its power on himself. For, though he speaks of being forced to the Countess of Huntingdon's college, he evidently gave his whole soul to the ministry. His visit to the Tabernacle, and Tottenham Court chapels, was productive of extraordinary popularity; for he was distinguished by that bold and striking exhibition of the doctrines of the Gospel,

accompanied with a tinge of eccentricity, which was in high repute among the Calvinistic Methodists. He was introduced to this connexion by the celebrated Rowland Hill. Having been chosen to be the resident minister of the Tabernacle, he may be called the successor of Whitfield. In the autumn of the year 1775, when he was about twenty-nine, he was ordained to the pastoral charge, Mr. Berridge, vicar of Everton, Mr. Percy, another episcopally ordained minister, and Mr. Joss, usually called Captain Joss, joining in the ordination service; for many of the evangelical clergy, at that time, united with the Calvinistic Methodists in their most irregular methods of diffusing the knowledge of the Gospel.

Mr. Wilks soon acquired great influence, in his own connexion, for his zeal was ardent, and he abounded in labours. In the Tabernacles of Bristol, Kingswood, Haverford West, Greenwich, and Mitcham, he preached frequently; as well as at Tottenham Court Chapel, which was considered a part of his own charge. "His style of preaching," says one of his converts, "had many excellences; his plans were all his own, and frequently discovered great ingenuity: there was, at times, a quaintness in his manner that gave offence to some, and occasionally caused regret to his most intimate friends. As this defect has been mentioned to his disadvantage, I feel it to be due to his memory to mention a circumstance which will show the dispositions of his heart better than a thousand apologies. While under his tuition, I was once with him in his study, receiving from him the most fatherly and judicious advice, when, among other things, he advised

me, by all means, to avoid his peculiarities. I ventured, on this occasion, to mention some singular expression that he had introduced in his sermon on the preceding sabbath. 'Did I say so?' was the question he proposed. I answered in the affirmative. He replied, 'You may believe me when I tell you, that these things are always unpremeditated and spontaneous. God is my witness, that if I could atone for them by shedding *tears of blood*, I would most gladly do it.' He added, 'Let us pray,' and kneeling down before his desk, he humbly begged of God to forgive this and the other sins of his ministry."

His usefulness was very extensive, and many were not only called to the knowledge of Christ, by his preaching, but were induced, by his example and influence, to devote themselves to the ministry. He once mentioned to a friend the names of nine ministers in England, and one in Scotland, who were the fruits of his labours. For he was the kind friend and councillor of young ministers; and, on every occasion, took delight to serve those who devoted themselves to the service of Christ and the church. He contributed to call into existence several of the great schemes which are now in operation, and which are destined to impart the best of blessings to the world. If the "Evangelical Magazine" did not originate with him, he was one of its first promoters, and by his wise suggestions, greatly improved its original design. Its catholic spirit, and its benevolent attention to the widows of deceased ministers, exactly met his views; and he lived to see it arrive at a degree of usefulness, which even his sanguine mind never anticipated.

Those who have been engaged in conducting it, know how anxiously he watched over it, and how deeply he felt for the interest of those pious widows who have shared in its profits.

He was one of the fathers of the London Missionary Society. He preached a sermon, previously to its formation, at Tottenham Court chapel, in the year 1795, from Psalm xliii. 3—"O send out thy light and thy truth;" in which he set forth the perishing state of the heathen, and the duty of Christians towards them, with his usual ability. At the close of the discourse, he told the congregation that he was going, in the following week, to meet a few pious ministers and gentlemen, to confer upon the expediency of sending the Gospel to those who were perishing for lack of knowledge in heathen lands;—this sermon was the means of awakening a missionary spirit in the bosoms of many who heard it. His attachment to this noble institution continued unabated to the last hour of his life. His sermon, preached at its annual meeting, at Surrey chapel, in the year 1812, was the most productive in its effects of any that has been preached on its behalf. From that discourse have arisen all the auxiliary and branch societies in England and America, by which the funds of the parent institution have been so greatly increased.

He was the father of the Irish Evangelical Society. A few years before the formation of this important institution, the Hibernian Society was established, whose object was to diffuse the Gospel, circulate the Scriptures, and establish schools in Ireland; of this society he became a zealous and active member. But

when, for reasons which some good men thought expedient, the preaching of the Gospel was left out of their plans, he could not conscientiously continue to give his support to an institution which had laid aside one of the most important means of converting sinners to God; and he, with others who thought with him, formed the Irish Evangelical Society, more especially for the purpose of educating young men for the ministry of the Gospel in Ireland. This society has had to contend with many and formidable difficulties, which greatly affected his mind, as the interests of the sister island always lay near his heart. How strikingly does this appear from the fact, that even in his seventy-ninth year, he travelled to Dublin, with Mr. Townsend and Mr. Walker, to arrange the affairs of the academy, and other important business, which was accomplished in nine days!

"He was the parent of the Village Itinerancy Society, over which he tenderly watched, with a father's care, to the last week of his life. He knew that there were other institutions for the education of young men for the ministry, and he rejoiced in their prosperity; but he wished to see more attention paid to remote and destitute villages; he delighted to remember the forgotten—to attend to the neglected—to visit the forsaken; and he thought there was room for another society, which should attend more particularly to these objects. He lived to see this society flourish far beyond his most sanguine expectations. It has planted the tree of life in many a dark village; it has erected many temples for the living God; and its students are labouring in more than a hundred stations in different

parts of the kingdom, whilst others are filling important spheres in London, and in other large towns. Its tutors, its students, and its committee, will never cease to cherish the greatest veneration for his memory. The last day that he was from home, he sat in their council, and took an affectionate leave of them, as if he wished them to understand that they would see his face no more."

He paid great attention to his own flock, amidst an extraordinary pressure of public labours; and by early rising secured time for every thing. After a long life of vigorous health, he sunk under the infirmities of age, and died in the enjoyment of peace and hope, January 29, 1829, in his eighty-third year. Mr. Hill, who had introduced him to the Tabernacle, fifty-four years before, there officiated at the funeral service, while he was himself tottering on the borders of the grave, being still older than the man whom he survived.

Mr. Wilks was a type of that generation which followed in the steps of Whitfield. Bold, ardent, energetic, and laborious, he lived for the salvation of men. Not strictly a dissenter in theory, but an ultra dissenter in practice; he loved all good men, whether in the establishment or among other communions; for, like most of the Methodists, he seems to have thought that no church government was prescribed in the Scriptures, and that usefulness was the only principle that should guide the church and ministry of Christ.

With an apparent love of rule, Mr. Wilks sought to rule only for the good of others; under a stern and harsh exterior, which often offended those who did not understand him, he was well known by his intimate friends to

conceal an almost chivalrous benevolence; and though he seemed coarse, and quaint, and vulgar in his tastes, he had a just and quick discernment of the beauties of thought and composition. His sermon before the Annual Meeting of the London Missionary Society, which he *read* to the surprise of all, as much surprised them by its beauties; for though none who knew him doubted his ability to do any thing of that kind, no one expected him to show so much inclination.

THE REV. JOHN HYATT, LONDON.

This colleague with the subject of the preceding memoir, held the post of preacher at Tottenham Court chapel, which is in close connexion with the Tabernacle, the scene of Mr. Wilks' labours. Mr. Hyatt was a native of Sherbourne, in Dorsetshire, and descended of a family much attached to the forms of the Establishment, but destitute of the spirit of real religion. His education was exceedingly defective; though his mental power was early developed; and as he was put to trade, he soon succeeded to a good business, which afforded him a prospect somewhat flattering. As he was one of those men who are born for distinction; while he continued ignorant of the nature and value of the Gospel, he became so devoted to the world and sin, that his biographer says of him, "No one could have appeared at a greater distance from the kingdom of God."

The circumstance which led to a total change in Mr. Hyatt's character and history, was an attachment he conceived for Miss Westcomb, the niece of Mr. Vardy, the deceased pastor of the Independent Church in Sher-

bourne. Remote as his character was from hers, nothing could seem more improbable than that which Mr. Hyatt always declared, "That it was the striking exhibition of the graces of religion which won and fixed his heart." To attain his object, he found it was necessary to join her in attendance on the preaching of the Gospel, at the Independent chapel, which informed his judgment, while yet his prejudices against the religion of Dissenters remained in all their force, except towards his favoured fair one. The library of Mr. Vardy was now opened to him; and as he was passionately fond of reading, a store of theological works accomplished what the preaching of the word had not effected; for he used to say, that his reading gave birth to that change of views and character which was the commencement of his religious history.

He married the lady, and avowed his conversion with a fearless decision, which drew upon him a flood of persecution from his former connexions and dearest friends. For though his conduct was said to have been as amiable as it was decided, he was threatened with ruin, in a town where the state of religion among the Dissenters was not at that time such as to oppose a powerful barrier to the prevailing ignorance of the Gospel, and love of the world. His temporal circumstances were, however, not eventually injured by his joining the Independent chapel; and his skill and industry in business vanquished, as usual, the opposition of bigotry, and opened to him a fair prospect of competency.

About this time, he formed an acquaintance with a Wesleyan preacher, whose piety he esteemed; but

whose Arminianism awakened this young convert to study the five points. With an increased ardour he searched his Bible and his theological library, and, meeting with Elisha Cole's "Essay on Divine Sovereignty," he was so confirmed by it in his Calvinistic sentiments, that its effects were discernible in his future preaching, and in the warmth with which he recommended that work to those who are hesitating, whether they should become disciples of the school of Calvin or Arminius.

But as he maintained his religious friendship for the man from whom he differed, he went to hear him in an adjoining village. The time of commencing the service having elapsed, and the preacher not appearing, the farmer, at whose house the meetings were held, called upon Mr. Hyatt to address the congregation; and this circumstance made Mr. Hyatt a preacher, as a similar occurrence has made many another: for when the trembling speaker had finished his discourse, the farmer was induced, by its effects, to announce the same preacher for the evening of the next Lord's day. After a severe conflict between his fears and his zeal, he appeared according to the announcement, and such was his success, that he concluded, that this was the path of duty opened to him by the hand of God.

But the pastor and the flock to which he belonged did not sympathise with him, and a kind of popish prejudice against lay preaching brought upon him unkind and discouraging reflections, which were calculated to drive him out of the proper course. Instead of a candid inquiry into the will of God, and a friendly

offer of aid, he met with opposition or neglect, which the ardour and determination of his character were ill fitted to brook.

He persevered, however, and by diligent reading, amidst the claims of business for the support of his family, so improved his mind that he became popular, and was invited, by more than one congregation, to become a settled minister. His own pastor became more favourable; his Wesleyan friend generously encouraged him to proceed; he was received into the pulpits of many dissenting congregations; he found that his sermons were not only favourably received, but followed by the happiest effects; and to such an extent was he useful in the town of Mere, that he accepted the invitation to settle there. Soon after, therefore, he parted with his business, leaving considerable property that he had acquired in the hands of his successor. As this was eventually lost, he was compelled to accept an invitation to the charge of a larger congregation, at Froome, where his good sense and industry were displayed by extraordinary efforts to render himself equal to his more arduous duties. He wrote every word of the sermons he preached; and his printed discourses show that he must have read and thought, as well as written. The regret we feel that he was not advised to pursue a regular course of preparatory studies, is considerably diminished by the incontrovertible proofs he gave of power and inclination to surmount his early disadvantages, by the labours of his future life. In fact, he educated himself, and though the mind that could do this would have turned to the best account higher advantages, he must

still be pronounced a better preacher than many who plume themselves on a college education!

While at Froome, Mr. Hyatt paid annual visits to the Tabernacles at Bristol and Haverford West, which are accustomed to depend entirely on a monthly rotation of ministers; and on one of these visits, Mr. Wilks proposed to him a similar service at the Tabernacle and Tottenham Court chapel, London. His first sermon was so well received that he became an annual preacher, and the declining health of Mr. J. A. Knight induced the managers to invite Mr. Hyatt to become his successor. The friendship of Mr. Wilks encouraged his younger brother to become his colleague, and as their attachment was never interrupted by any jealousy, Mr. Hyatt found himself in a sphere of extraordinary usefulness, in one of the largest congregations in London. His ministry was characterised by singular energy and fidelity; and if it betrayed the defects which usually accompany self-educated men, it also exhibited their excellences; and is said to have been honoured by more usefulness than almost any man had enjoyed since the days of Whitfield. Mr. Hyatt carried his Independent principles into the Methodist connexion, never hearing the Liturgy read, and struggling to purify the communion by admitting none to the Lord's table but on a profession of regeneration.

His zeal was too much for his prudence; and having contracted an asthma, he neglected it, till he sunk under its ravages, after twenty years of arduous labour in London, in the month of January, 1826, in the enjoyment of a lively faith and exalted hope. The pulpit

was the place in which he excelled, and he rendered it subservient to the interests of Calvinistic theology, purified from every taint of Antinomianism, and fearlessly devoted to evangelical truth and holiness.

RICHARD WATSON.

Richard Watson, the best writer among the Wesleyans, was born February 22nd, 1781, at Barton, in Lincolnshire. His father, who was a Dissenter, often took him across the Humber to hear Mr. Lambert, the venerable Independent minister of Hull, for whom the son ever after cherished the highest esteem. The love of reading soon gave promise of the future eminence of this youth, who is said to have read, at six years of age, sixteen volumes of the "Universal History," and to have committed Telemachus to memory. When his family removed to Lincoln, he entered its grammar school, and laid the foundation of that knowledge of Latin and Greek, which afterwards gave him great advantage in his ministry. But his father, having a large family, took him from his studies to apprentice him to a trade in Nottingham. Here he became acquainted with the Methodists, not, at first, in a way either creditable or profitable to him; for his character had deteriorated, and he became a scoffer at religion, indulging, for the sake of sport, in those petty modes of persecution by which our country was disgraced, till the progress of religion covered those reliques of barbarism with shame.

At length, however, he was seriously impressed by the preaching of a Methodist, Mr. Sargent, and became a preacher of the faith he once attempted to

destroy. The solemn reflections to which the death of his grandmother gave rise, induced him first to attempt to preach, in a cottage, in the village of Boothby, when he was but fifteen years old. He afterwards preached in the open air, amidst riots and insults, such as he had himself formerly delighted to create. To obtain a legal defence from these assaults, he applied to the magistrates, according to the provisions of the Toleration Act, but was repelled under the pretence that, as an apprentice, he could not claim this protection. He succeeded, however, in another quarter, and soon after preached in the Methodist chapel at Newark, where the intolerance of the high church mob once burnt the pulpit and forms of the chapel in the market-place. His master was soon induced to cancel his indentures, which left him at liberty to become an assistant to the Methodist preacher, at Newark, and he was received into the number of the travelling preachers when he was not much more than sixteen. But the labours of his first circuit were too much for a frame never very robust, and he was obliged to return home and seek recovery by rest.

Recommencing his labours as soon as he was able, he added to them the fatigue of diligent study, to which he was ardently attached. But being young, he was fond of argument, and those who either did not understand him, or were piqued at his superiority, represented him as an Arian, and a denier of original sin. He seems to have been disgusted by the unwise and unkind treatment of the Methodists, at this time, and though he had not adopted the sentiments with which he was charged, he quitted the connexion.

That his creed was unchanged, may be fairly inferred from his joining the Methodist New Connexion, which holds the same faith as the body from which it sprang, though differing somewhat in discipline. He was soon admitted to travel as a preacher, and being appointed to the Liverpool circuit, he joined in an attempt to establish a newspaper there. As his politics were like those of the Methodists in general, he engaged in a controversy with the celebrated Mr. Roscoe, on the war with France.

But his health failing again, and his mind not being satisfied with the New Connexion, he resigned his post, and joined his first friends as a private member. He was, however, soon restored to the office of a travelling preacher. As his mind had now become much enlarged, and his style of preaching improved, he soon became one of the most popular preachers. To the cause of missions, which was at this time taken up very warmly by the Methodists, in common with other bodies of evangelical Christians, Mr. Watson gave all the ardour of his mind, which brought him into very general notice and esteem. Being appointed to the Hull circuit, he preached a funeral sermon, in the Methodist chapel, for Mr. Lambert, who was, at that time, called home to his rest, amidst the regrets of all who knew how to esteem religious worth. Here Mr. Watson's labours were so popular and efficient, that the Methodists being much increased, built one of their largest and most elegant chapels.

After this, he was called to London, and being appointed to a Metropolitan circuit, he was also made one of the secretaries of the Wesleyan Missionary

Society. He was now in the zenith of his usefulness; for his superior preaching was duly appreciated, and his elegant style gave a charm to the Reports which he drew up. His discretion and urbanity were highly advantageous to the cause of missions, and brought him into intercourse with influential persons of various religious denominations.

He now ventured on the bold step of opposing Dr. Clarke, whose reputation among the Methodists was almost paramount. The attack was published in 1808, in the form of a letter to a friend, in refutation of Dr. Clarke's notion of the sonship of Christ. Mr. Watson's pamphlet, which was written in the best spirit of contention, for truth, rather than victory, is designed to show that Dr. Clarke's opinion of Christ being called the Son of God, solely on account of the miraculous conception of his humanity, cannot be made to accord with those Scriptures which exhibit the title, Son of God, as a claim to deity. Whether the Methodists were previously of this opinion, or whether they were convinced by Mr. Watson, does not appear, though the former seems more probable; but so decidedly did they afterwards adopt Mr. Watson's views, that they determined to make this question a test for admission into the rank of travelling preachers.

When Dr. Southey published the Life of Wesley, the Methodists deemed it necessary to counteract the irreligious tendency of that work; and it is highly to Dr. Clarke's honour that he pronounced his antagonist, Mr. Watson, the fittest person to write a life of their founder. This gave birth to the best biography

that has yet appeared of that extraordinary man. Of this life, undertaken in 1820, Mr. Watson, eleven years after, wrote an abridgment.

For the interests of the Methodist missions, Mr. Watson was, in 1821, fixed in London, as one of the secretaries. This post was favourable to his literary labours, which he now pursued with increased ardour and success. He published, in 1823, his "Theological Institutes; or a View of the Evidences, Doctrines, Morals, and Institutions of Christianity." The theology of the work is, of course, Arminian; but it controverts Dr. Clarke's hypothesis, which would reject the foreknowledge of God, in order to escape his decrees.

Mr. Watson was now elevated to the post of honour among the Wesleyans; for, in the Conference that was held at Liverpool in 1826, he was elected President. This was an extraordinary testimony to the superiority of his talents and worth, after he had left the body under a suspicion of heresy, and had joined a rival section of the Methodists. But he was now verging towards the close of his career; for when the cholera visited London in 1832, he was in that infirm state of health which rendered him an easy prey to the disease. After his constitution had been thoroughly broken, he yielded to the importunities of friends, and retired to Brighton. There, instead of resting from labour, he finished his Theological and Biblical Dictionary. Returning to London, with little improvement, he made a final effort to preach for the Methodist school at Kingswood, after which he rapidly sunk, and died, January 8, 1832, aged fifty-two.

He brought into the Methodist ministry more taste and eloquence than almost any of his brethren. His sermons on great occasions, and especially on the subject of missions, which was his forte, and the pedestal of his fame, produced a fine effect. His independence of mind, which at first drove him from the connexion, triumphed at last, and gave him the precedence in theology, and, perhaps, also in influence, over many who had been long entrenched in the estimation of the Methodists. As a preacher, he made cautious approaches by an appeal to the understanding, and closed with bursts of eloquence which carried captive every heart. As a writer, he was distinguished for taste rather than genius, and for elegance more than strength. As a theologian, his reading was extensive and various, not confined to those who favoured his own creed, and his judgment was usually just; but acute and profound reasoning was not his distinguishing faculty; for he shone most when presenting great moral duties to the conscience, and pressing them on the heart. His sun went down at noon, when it was, perhaps, not yet seen what he would have been, and his early death was a great loss, not only to his own communion, which needed just such a man, but also to the Christian church, which saw in him a minister who won the esteem of those who differed from his creed.

ADAM CLARKE, LL.D.

Adam Clarke was a native of Ireland, and by the mother's side descended from the Scotch. Born somewhere between 1760 and 1762, at a village near Coleraine, he had the advantage of a father who kept the

parish school, and was such an enthusiast for the classics, that he cultivated a small farm according to the directions of Virgil's Georgics. As the son early imbibed a kindred spirit, he often wandered, when a mere boy, to a great distance, to obtain the loan of books to satisfy his thirst for knowledge. A young neighbour, son of the lord of the manor, one day invited him to go to hear the Methodists, who were just come into the neighbourhood; and the preacher, Mr. Brettel, enjoyed the honour of producing the first impressions of a serious nature on the mind of him who was destined to be a distinguished ornament to methodism. But a Mr. Barber, one of the fruits of Mr. Wesley's labours, was the person whose ministry was most blessed to young Clarke, who speaks of himself as receiving the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins, while pursuing the labours of agriculture. "Being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly," and took the kingdom of heaven by violence. "The ground where I knelt," he says, "was literally like ploughed ground." Having obtained peace of mind, he was soon induced, by an eccentric preacher, John Bredin, to attempt to preach.

Recommended to Mr. Wesley as a youth of extraordinary promise, he was sent to Kingswood school, near Bristol, and in 1782 was appointed, though only nineteen, to the station of an itinerant preacher, at Bradford, in Wiltshire. This was the commencement of a course which he pursued for nearly half a century. He maintained, not merely the ordinary studies which his daily duties demanded, but as he said of himself, "Through desire, having separated himself,

he sought and intermeddled with *all* wisdom." A great economist of time, he spurned many of those scenes in which good men and ministers often indulge, with a view, as much to usefulness as to pleasure. He enjoyed the advantage of travelling occasionally with Mr. Wesley, to whom, on one journey, he read the whole of the logic of Crousaz, in French, which led the father of the Methodists to observe, in a letter, "Adam Clarke is doubtless an extraordinary young man, and capable of doing much good."

His conscience, however, remained so tender, amidst the torpifying effects of literature, that, when some whose zeal was greater than their knowledge, told him his pursuits of learning would be fatal to his piety, he vowed he would read no more Latin. But he was induced to rescind the rash vow, by Mr. Wesley, who had been informed of his change. He combined a kind and faithful attention to the poor and the sick, and to all the minor duties of his ministry, with the studies by which he afterwards rose to eminence. Of this excellence, as also of his fervour in sacred devotions, some affecting anecdotes are related.

As a preacher, he used to affirm, that his popularity was chiefly owing to the mighty power of the peculiar doctrines of methodism: "By constantly hammering at these," he said, "I can outcongregation them all." The spice of vanity that is so strong in this saying, was often observed in him by those who were not disposed to admire every thing they saw in a popular favourite. Nor was this saying true; for the secret of his popularity lay in his reputation for extraordinary learning, which was at that time a great rarity in his

own communion. Accustomed to be addressed by illiterate men, to be taunted for their ignorance and coarseness, the Methodists felt themselves flattered by one whom they deemed a colossus of learning, before this was as true as they imagined. He had neither imagination nor eloquence equal to his knowledge, and the body of the people did not much enjoy him as a preacher, except when he indulged, as he often did, in strong declarations of the truth and glory of their peculiar doctrines. This endeared him to them as the learned champion of a communion to which they were attached; and induced them to conclude, that much of his discourse which they did not understand was superlatively wise and good. The strong confidence he felt in his powers and his cause gave him the air of an infallible oracle, which is very fascinating to the uninformed; but the same cause induced him to slight his preparation for the pulpit, except on great occasions, when he put out all his strength. He dwelt, however, more on verbal criticism than is conducive to general edification. He gave himself, indeed, ardently to the study of languages, which affords a man, who is so disposed, an opportunity of astounding the illiterate, who are not aware that languages are but a means, and may lead to no valuable end.

His first knowledge of biblical criticism he owed to Miss Kennicott, who, hearing of his thirst for learning, lent him her brother's valuable edition of the Hebrew Bible. In the Island of Jersey he obtained the use of Walton's Polyglott, among the books deposited in the public library of St. Hellier, and thus his attention

was so turned to the oriental versions of the Scriptures; that he set his heart on obtaining a Polyglott, which was afterwards put within his reach by the unexpected present of a ten pound note.

Mr. Clarke entered on the London circuit, in 1795; and then commenced a course of preparation for his "Commentary on the Old and New Testament." He afforded to the Bible Society valuable assistance in publishing an Arabic version of the Scriptures; but refused the proffered remuneration of fifty pounds. In the spring of 1808, he received from the University of Aberdeen a diploma of LL.D.

The fruits of his passion for bibliography appeared in the publication of his Dictionary, and of his "View of the Succession of Sacred Literature." These works, which were calculated, and doubtless designed, to impart useful knowledge to the preachers of his own denomination, and to kindle in them a love of reading, demonstrate the laborious diligence which he must have exerted to accumulate these stores, amidst the daily labours of a Methodist preacher. It is affirmed that he never trusted to the research of his predecessors in this line, but sought out and examined for himself the volumes whose titles and contents he has enumerated.

He published a translation of Sturm's popular German work, "Reflections for every Day in the Year;" which was imperfect, as it was founded, not on the original, but on a French version. He studied, not only Hebrew, but Arabic and Persian, and acquired some knowledge of Sanscrit; and to our mother

tongue, the Saxon, he paid so much attention that he was introduced to the Commission for arranging our national records.

The state papers, published in Rymer's Fœdera, form a valuable collection. They commence from the reign of Henry I., 1131, but come not lower down than six years after the death of Charles I. A royal commission pronounced it desirable to complete the work; and Dr. Clarke, who drew up an essay on the subject, was desired to search the public offices, to ascertain what articles they afforded towards supplying the deficiencies of Rymer. For this work, Dr. Clarke asked and obtained a private room at the British Museum; but after carrying through the press nearly four folio volumes, he closed his labours, which obtained him great credit. He laboured hard, in conjunction with some eminent men of various communions, to obtain a new and improved Polyglott Bible; but though subscriptions were promised, and Joseph Butterworth, Esq., bookseller, of Fleet-street, offered five hundred pounds towards the expense of the first volume, the Lords, spiritual and temporal, suffered the scheme to drop. He became, during the year 1808, principal librarian to the Surrey Institution. The first volume of his Commentary, which appeared in 1810, attracted severe censure, on account of his opinion, that it was not a serpent that tempted Eve, but an ourang-outang. Mr. Scott, the commentator, maintained a controversy with him, in the Christian Observer, on the use made of the Septuagint by the writers of the New Testament.

As his labours in the Record Commission, added to

those required by the publication of his Commentary, exhausted a constitution, which had been severely tried by the Methodist ministry, he retired, in 1815, to the neighbourhood of Liverpool, where he purchased an estate. Here, however, he was not allowed to rest; for he received an important addition to his cares and toils, in two Budhist priests, who had come to this country to learn the Christian religion, and were placed under Dr. Clarke. For them he drew up a summary of faith, and, after some time, he had the pleasure of baptising them in the name of Christ.

To be near his family, he removed to London, but finding that the metropolis did not suit his health, he purchased a residence at Eastcott, to which he retired in 1824. Here he finished the work to which he had devoted a great part of his life, and on the anniversary of his marriage, he took his son into his study, and said, "This, Joseph, is the happiest period I have enjoyed for years. I have put the last hand to my Commentary. I have written the last word of the work."

In 1832, the cholera being in England, among those who were carried off by it was Dr. Clarke. Having been accustomed to suffer from dysentery, he at first took little notice of the attack; but it soon put on the malignant form, and terminated his life in August, 1832.

He was a noble proof of the wonders that may be wrought by persevering industry. Feebleness and indolence would have said that the eminence to which he ultimately attained was beyond his reach; but to such determination and diligence as he displayed,

what can safely be pronounced impossible? The same daring spirit that overcame the difficulties with which he had to contend, left its impressions on his labours, both in the pulpit and the press. He was a bold and dogmatical preacher, rather than an elegant or persuasive orator, preaching like one who thought he had a right to dictate and command. This was more excusable amidst his own communion, where he towered so high above them all; but the same fault appears in his writings, which were addressed to a wider sphere, that contained his equals, or superiors. His publications are defective in style, and bear strong marks of the self-taught genius. He ventures on bold theories, and disdains to notice the replies by which they were demolished. His opinion concerning the instrument employed in tempting Eve, which obtained for his Commentary the title of the Monkey Bible, was as flimsy as it was rash and useless; and his doctrine concerning the Sonship of Christ, which, though no novelty, he cherished as his own child, was condemned by the Methodist Conference as a heresy that deserved exclusion from their communion, which had tolerated it in him. His suggestion of the probable salvation of Judas, was defended by criticism that serves only to show how that art may be abused.

But the rashness of his mind, and his want of logical accuracy, appear most conspicuously in his theory of Prescience, advanced in his Commentary on Acts xv. When the Calvinists defended the decrees of God, by showing that his infallible foreknowledge involved the same consequences, and by charging the

Arminians with virtually denying his prescience, Mr. Wesley, treated this charge as a calumny, and declared his unshaken belief in the divine foreknowledge. But Dr. Clarke, by his attack on the divine prescience, defended the Calvinists. He maintained the contradictory theory, first, that God could, but would not; and then, that he could not foresee free actions. Reckless that one of these positions destroys the other, he contends that future contingent events are, from their very nature, incapable of being foreknown; without deigning to notice that all the prophecies show this to be false; and yet he argues against the objection, that this limits the Holy One of Israel, by saying, that as God's power is not limited because he does not effect all that he could, so, though he could foresee future events, he has determined not to exercise any foreknowledge of future contingencies in order to leave accountable agents free. This again is, on the one hand, abandoning the just plea of Mr. Wesley and the Arminian school, that foreknowledge implies no control over the events foreseen; and, on the other, granting more than Calvinists ask; for all they contend for is, that certain foreknowledge implies absolute certainty in the events, without determining from whence that certainty arises, and without supposing that foreknowledge interferes, as Dr. Clarke's theory implies, with the freedom of the actions foreseen. His Commentary, therefore, devoted to the support of Arminianism, is, to those who are capable of this difficult investigation, its most effectual refutation. For of what use is it to discuss the possibility or exercise of prescience, or its

consistency with free agency, when we have in the Bible innumerable predictions of future contingencies for which free agents will be judged ?

Similar recklessness of consequences is displayed in the use which Dr. Clarke has made of Dr. Taylor's Key to the Romans. Calvinistic divines on the continent, and in England, had maintained, that Arminianism leads to Socinianism ; but Dr. Clarke made, without acknowledgment, large extracts from the Key of the Coryphæus of Socinians, and incorporated them in his Commentary, taking no notice of the refutation which Taylor had met, especially by the master-mind of President Edwards, in his work on Original Sin. His own communion, however, here opposed Dr. Clarke, some of them observing, that the difficulties in the Epistle to the Romans were not to be unlocked by this key.

His Commentary, which is his chief claim to posthumous celebrity, displays extensive reading. It is chargeable with *display* of learning amassed, rather than digested, and its tendency is to be deprecated, especially among those of his own communion, among whom chiefly it will be valued.

But his diligent and faithful discharge of the laborious duties of a Methodist preacher, amidst the assiduous pursuit of various learning, entitle him to high praise. He never suffered the fascinations of literature to extinguish, or enfeeble, his early devotion to the most important of all pursuits, the preaching of righteousness, to turn sinners from the error of their ways. In private life, he was aimable and beloved, generous and noble. His strong sectarianism, which

offended many who viewed him at a distance, disappeared when he came into close contact with intelligent men of different views. Dr. Clarke was at the head of a respectable class, who have defended Mr. Wesley from the charge of degrading the Christian ministry by introducing into it uneducated men; for these have furnished striking specimens of the tendency of religion to seize on the treasures which learning has placed within our reach. The ministry, which has been disgraced, not only by the vices, but by the ignorance of men educated in colleges, has been adorned, both by the useful labours, and also by the recondite learning and elegant writings of those who could say, "We owe nothing to colleges, but colleges owe something to us."

JOSEPH HARDCASTLE, ESQ.

If Britain, like Tyre, may boast that her merchants are princes, Joseph Hardcastle displayed a princely mind, superior to greediness of gain, or love of splendour, and consecrated, not only to the best interests of the church of Christ, but also of the whole human race. Born at Leeds, he came to London when he was fourteen, and was introduced by an uncle of the same name into a large mercantile house, and before he was of age, upon him devolved the whole concern. Early and decided piety led to that wisdom and integrity with which he conducted his business, and which gave him a high reputation in the commercial world, so that for about half a century, he stood a model for the Christian merchant.

Religion was the basis of his eminence. Thoroughly

acquainted with the Scriptures, and with the writings of the Nonconformists, the doctrines that are usually termed evangelical he embraced with a faith as firm as it was enlightened. He had caught the spirit of Owen and Howe; and the manner in which he conducted the worship of God in his family, as well as the skill with which he solved difficulties that occurred in reading the Scriptures, proved how much he profited by his conscientious attention to secret devotion.

The Christian virtues that were well known, and highly appreciated, by his intimate friends, were called out to action on a stage worthy of his powers, by the formation of the Missionary Society, of which he became the first treasurer. Of the numerous tokens of divine favour towards that institution, the promptitude and zeal with which Mr. Hardcastle was selected, and consented, to preside over its financial affairs, was not the least. It was justly observed by Dr. Bogue, in his funeral sermon, that "The qualifications of Mr. Hardcastle for the office of treasurer were of the highest order. His intellect was acute and penetrating, and his judgment was sound, being endued both with sagacity and profoundness; his views were comprehensive, and his principles liberal and enlarged. To the justness of this sketch, the fullest testimony will be borne by those who have perused the documents he furnished, from time to time, for the service of the society, or listened to him when he delivered his opinions on questions of importance. With talents were combined excellences of a still higher and nobler kind. A calm, mild, and amiable temper peculiarly

distinguished him, and was maintained amidst all the eagerness of debate on subjects of moment and difficulty. In gentleness of disposition and manners he had few equals. Benignity and affection beamed forth in his countenance and deportment, and endeared him to all who were engaged in the same arduous work. His extensive and continued liberality, from year to year, entitle him to the rank of the first pecuniary benefactor to the Society. Over all these excellencies was thrown the mantle of unaffected simplicity and profound humility, which assumed nothing, which boasted nothing, and made no show. A life of unfeigned piety was the basis on which they rested, and which sustained the whole. Such was the man we have lost."

"After filling the treasurer's office for more than twenty years, with signal benefit to the Society, bodily infirmities would not permit the mind, which was still vigorous and powerful, to continue its exertions, but constrained him to retire from public life. One part of the earthly tabernacle gave way after another, till death at last dissolved the whole frame. What his views and prospects, what his hopes and feelings were under his affliction, and at the perceived approach of death, you may naturally wish to know; and I am happy to be able to gratify you from documents put into my hands by his family, containing the expressions which dropped from his lips, which carry with them unquestionable evidence that they flowed from his heart, and which I here subjoin."

"Lord Jesus, thou hast said, 'He that believeth in

me shall never die; and he that believeth, though he were dead, yet shall he live.' I believe this; I believe I shall never know what death is, but pass into life."

"Thou hast said, 'Him that cometh to me, I will in nowise cast out;' I come to thee, thou wilt not cast me out."

"Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life, and I am going to dwell in the house of the Lord for ever. I am infinitely indebted to him for his conduct of me, from infancy to the end of my life. He took me by the hand in a wonderful manner, and brought me into connection with the excellent of the earth. Most glorious God, I commit my offspring to thee; and I charge my children to walk in thy fear and love."

"He has drawn me with the cords of mercy from my earliest days. He gave me very early impressions of religion, and enabled me to devote myself to him in early life; and this God is my God for ever and ever, for ever and ever. I said to him, when a young man, 'Thou shalt guide me by thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.'"

"No principle can enter the mind so sublime as the doctrine of the cross, which with infinite majesty speaks peace in heaven, on earth, and throughout the universe. Let every one of my children glory in the cross of salvation; it is the power of God to every one that believeth—the *power* of God! What feeble ideas do I attach to such expressions."

"I am, in some respects, like the old patriarch

Jacob, on his dying bed, with all his sons about him. Live in love, and the God of love be with you. This is my last farewell; this is our last interview, till we meet in a better world. My flesh and heart are failing; I hope I have not been deceiving myself. My children, seek for an interest in Christ, seek for an interest in Christ. I earnestly exhort you to be decided, and to be very useful. He is your best friend; manifest your regard to the Lord; avow your attachment; he is the glory and ornament of the universe."

"I hope I shall be favoured, when my spirit is departing, with some intimations of approaching glory; but I will trust in him, I will trust in him. In the meantime I possess a sweet peace, calm and undisturbed. I will go to God, my exceeding joy, as the Psalmist says. It is an awful thing for a human spirit, deeply depraved as it is, to appear before the tribunal of so mighty a Being. He putteth no trust in his servants. The heavens are not clean in his sight."

"If I am to live, I welcome life, and thank its giver; if I am to die, I welcome death, and thank its conqueror. If I have a choice, I would rather depart and be with Christ, which is far better."

"My last act of faith I wish to be, to take the blood of Jesus, as the high priest did when he entered behind the veil, and when I have past the veil, to appear with it before the throne."

"I have just finished my course, I hope also I may say, 'I have fought the good fight, I have kept the faith, and that henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me at that day.'"

"Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit; Lord Jesus, receive my spirit when it leaves the body; thou hast redeemed it; I have waited for thy salvation."

In addition to his direct contributions to the funds of the Missionary Society, he accommodated the directors with a place of business on his own premises, where he gave them hospitable refreshments; and at the close of the annual meetings, his mansion of Hatcham House entertained the principal friends of missions, of various denominations, and from almost all parts of the world. But any attempt to enumerate his generous services to this and other kindred institutions, would do more injury than justice to his memory; for it would leave the greater part untold. The superiority of his intellect, the ardour of his piety, the sweetness of his disposition, and his gentlemanly deportment, gave him a happy influence over a society composed of various, and as some would say, discordant elements, which were as yet but being gathered and formed into a system; while his high reputation with the government, and with the commercial and financial world, enabled him to lay the foundation of that secular confidence, which is so necessary to be reposed in an institution that supports numerous agents in all quarters of the globe.

JOHN BROADLEY WILSON, ESQ.

Of one of the most distinguished Christian philanthropists, who ought to be exhibited for the benefit of others, we are forbidden to speak at length, by a modest reserve, which was an ornament to his character, but is cultivated by his survivors, even to a fault. He

commenced life at the south-west extremity of the kingdom, and when at Plymouth, is said to have consecrated what would be thought an incredibly large proportion of his income to the cause of religion and benevolence. But "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth;" so that what would have been dreaded by most, as dooming a man to poverty, was followed by that wealth which never quenched, as it too often does, the fire of charity; but, through life, fed the flame. Himself a dissenter, and a member of a Baptist church, of which Mr. Hughes, one of the secretaries of the British and Foreign Bible Society was the pastor, the catholic spirit of this excellent minister, who deserves a niche among the worthies of his own communion, was eminently displayed by Mr. Wilson. He spent his life in doing good, and was as constantly busy in attending the meetings of the Bible Society, and other benevolent institutions, as most men are in the acquisition of riches, or the pursuits of pleasure. The liberality with which he gave away his money to objects that his sound judgment approved, was absolutely astonishing; and they who judged of his property, by the thousands he distributed annually, would have thought him much richer than he really was.

But he lived under the most powerful influence of that faith which looks at things unseen, and regards these as eternal, and all things else as evanescent. "There was nothing equivocal in his views of salvation, or in the way in which he proved his interest in the blessing." The person who wrote this last sentence lived under his roof, and speaks with confidence

of the spirituality, devotion, simplicity, and disinterestedness by which he was at all times distinguished. From his munificent distribution of property, he might have been thought very rich; but he set up for himself a far higher standard of duty than is usually adopted by the rich. He was much distressed by the love of accumulation which many who profess to be religious betray; and, on one occasion, he said of a person of that class, "he died wickedly rich." His own habits were simple and unexpensive, and having no family, he gave away to others, what many think they have a right to spend upon themselves.

In the midst of a course of unremitting labour for the interests of religion, which was his element and his bliss, he was seized with paralysis, and all the efforts of medicine failing, he expired, on the 16th of February, 1838, at his residence, on Clapham Common, in the seventy-first year of his age. His will expressed the same exalted devotion of his property to the cause of religion, as he had displayed through life.

He was the common friend of Christians in every communion; and those who applied to him on behalf of religious and benevolent objects, were as much delighted with his conversation, as they were usually surprised by the extent of his donations. If ever wealth might rationally expose its possessors to envy, it was when he was seen welcoming the incessant applications made to his purse; entering, with the deepest interest, into the claims of the object, and finishing the interview by granting liberal contributions, with such a grace as doubled the gift, and proved that he really believed the words of Him, who said,

"It is more blessed to give than to receive." His example was worth even more than his princely contributions; for it afforded a most encouraging instance of the power of religion to triumph over the root of all evil, and showed what the church of God might do to bless this fallen world, if its members would put an end to the insane and impious attempt to prove false the maxim of the Great Teacher, "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon."

THOMAS WELMAN, ESQ., OF POUNDISFORD PARK, SOMERSETSHIRE.

This gentleman was one of the few descendants of the Nonconformist confessors who stood out in bold prominence, to maintain the faith, and exhibit the spirit of their forefathers. In reviewing his ancestry, he could reckon up some of the most excellent of the earth; and on the maternal side, five successive generations, whose religious principles were decidedly evangelical, and whose piety was exemplary. The first of these was John Strange, an eminent merchant, and magistrate of Biddeford, in Devonshire. At the time of the plague, the mayor of the town having deserted his post, Mr. Strange, who had three times filled that office, was chosen by the inhabitants to officiate in his stead, and having paid the most heroic attention to the sufferers, he escaped the dreadful disease; though he died soon after.

The second was Mr. Jonathan Hanmer, who had married the daughter of Mr. Strange, and was ejected by the Act of Uniformity from the vicarage of Bishops' Tawton, and the lectureship at Barnstaple. He was

one of the best preachers of his day, but through the remainder of his life was haunted by the demon of persecution. He became the founder of a congregation of Dissenters at Barnstaple, his native place, to which he ministered in that secret way which those unhappy times required.

Next in this truly apostolical succession was Mr. John Hanmer, the son of the preceding minister, and like his father, a sufferer by the Act of Ejectment. He was the second pastor of the dissenting congregation at Barnstaple. Distinguished equally for piety, for learning, and for a most amiable spirit, he ministered with great success, till he was compelled by illness to retire.

Mrs. Tristram, who was the grandmother of Mr. Welman, was the only daughter of Mr. John Hanmer. She was a woman of exalted piety, whose ardent love of the truth for which her ancestors suffered, produced the noblest fruits, and rendered her dear to those who, in her day, espoused the cause of the Nonconformists.

Her daughter, Mrs. Welman, was the fifth in the line of ancestry, of whom the minister that preached Mr. Welman's funeral sermon, said, " Her many excellences must still be held in lively remembrance by the senior part of this congregation, who were, for a time, her contemporaries."

Mr. Welman was born, about the year 1743, and, as an elder son, inherited large property; though he had three sisters, two of whom passed their lives with him, as they were never married. His first wife was Miss Locke, by whom he had one daughter, a lady of eminent piety, who died not long after her marriage to

Mr. Noel, now Lord Barham. After living many years a widower, Mr. Welman married Miss Noel, daughter of Lady Barham, wife of Sir Gerard Noel, but a peeress in her own right. She was a Christian of a high order, who devoted her life to the honour of the Redeemer, and founded or supported dissenting congregations in various places that were destitute of the preaching of the Gospel. Her zeal for the salvation of others received a recompense most welcome to a Christian mother's heart—the eminent blessing which crowned her efforts to bring up her own children in the fear of God.

By his second marriage, Mr. Welman had one son, Charles Noel Welman, Esq., the present possessor of the family estates.

Mr. Welman lived to the age of eighty-six, a faithful adherent and liberal friend of the principles for which his ancestors were distinguished, long after many, perhaps most, of the richer descendants of the Nonconformists had forsaken the persecuted cause for the more fashionable conformity, or for the Socinianism, which, like a plague, extinguished many dissenting churches in the west of England. When, to show the pernicious effects of riches, it used to be said, that a close carriage never was known to remain to the third generation, at the door of a dissenting chapel where the Gospel was preached, Mr. Welman's was pointed out as the honourable exception; for he firmly retained the evangelical sentiments of his Nonconformist ancestors, and exhibited their devotional and practical effects, deploring the ravages of error among some dissenters, and by his own example put-

ting to shame the worldly conformity of others. His house was the temple of piety: his hall exhibited the hospitality of the old English gentleman, with the special regard which the wealthy Puritans showed for pious ministers who were not within the established pale; while aged and afflicted worth always found with him an asylum. What would in the world be called goodness of heart, he displayed to perfection, some think to excess, not only towards all with whom he conversed, especially his own tenants and servants, but even down to animals and trees. It is, therefore, unnecessary to say that his nonconformity was sufficiently remote from bigotry to make him, as the friend of all good men, rejoice in seeing the return of evangelical religion into that establishment from which his ancestors had been expelled, while he gave his best support to the dissenting churches, and especially to that one of which he was for so many years a member. His unostentatious habits, which enabled him to do the more good, saved him from many of the vexations attendant on the splendour in which most with his means would have indulged, but to which he preferred the peaceful pleasures of piety and benevolence. Can it be necessary to apologize for closing this memoir of the father, by quoting from his funeral sermon an address delivered to his son?

"And now, in turning to you for a moment, my dear young friend, allow me, with the purest affection and friendship, to speak to you, in the first place, of your peculiar honour and privilege, in being descended from such a race of pious and excellent ancestors, as those to whom you have already heard me refer. There

are few, indeed, that have the gratification of looking back upon such an illustrious and honourable line of succession, as that of the Stranges, the Hanmers, the Tristrams, the Welmans, and the Barhams; and who have had the advantage of being favoured with such a truly excellent and honourable parent as you have. These, all, having witnessed a good confession, and done honour to the times in which they lived, are now gone to receive their reward; and I cannot but imagine them, looking down upon you, as their successor, and as the heir and hope of the family, and of the neighbourhood, with a holy anxiety, (if there be anxiety in heaven, and surely there may be such anxiety as this,) to see you become the exemplary follower of them, as far as they followed the Saviour, and especially to see you zealously treading in the footsteps of your estimable father, and ultimately filling up his place in the important sphere in which, I trust, Providence intends you to move."

MRS. REBECCA WELMAN.

This lady was the younger of the two sisters, who have been mentioned as passing their lives with the subject of the preceding biographical sketch. Having been early inspired with the religious principles and spirit that so distinguished her maternal ancestors, she possessed that superiority of intellect, and ardour of benevolence which set them off to high advantage. Excelling, like so many of her sex, in talents for epistolary correspondence, she indulged in it, not merely as a favourite luxury, but as a channel of communication with intellectual eminence, consecrated to

the service of evangelical religion. So extensive was her correspondence with the principal dissenting ministers of her day, that it might have formed the business of a life, and would make many volumes, illustrative of the history which we are now bringing to a close; as, during the latter half of her life, her letters furnished a periodical treat for its author.

But her principles were too exalted to waste themselves on the luxuries, either of intellect, or even of religion. She remembered the charge "to do good, and to communicate, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." In the noblest sense, she made benevolence a trade, and her apartments were the workshop of charity. Taught by the sacrifice of the Redeemer, that the salvation of the soul is the first object of love truly divine, she laboured to diffuse the knowledge of the Gospel, by circulating religious books, instructing the rising generation, and assisting the ministers of religion, to whom she was a delicate and generous friend; but she was so far from being indifferent to the bodies of her fellow creatures, that a large proportion of her time and property was devoted to the furnishing of food, and raiment, and medicine to the poor and afflicted. In the prime of her days, she was the ornament and charm of the select circle in which she moved. To her fine understanding, and conversational powers, her own family instinctively gave the lead, which her unaffected humility and amiable temper, always rendered pleasant, while her eminent piety turned it into a blessing. Wherever she had been thrown, she must have become the guardian genius of the place; for as nothing but death could

paralyse her activity, she devoted herself to the service of others with that fascinating power, that always ends in acquiring undisputed ascendancy.

Her brother, who so loved and admired her, as perhaps to be proud of her, wisely gave her the administration of his benevolence, which men may be better able to furnish, but women know best how to dispense. Her days were, therefore, passed in the very way that she would have wished—divided between the exercises of personal and social religion; the labours of a generous and multifarious benevolence; and the cultivation of friendships, refined by intellect, and consecrated by devotion to the interests of eternity.

Having seen her brother die in peace, and his heir rising up, the object of her most intense devotional aspirations, she departed, in joyful hope of joining the ancestors whose memory she fondly cherished, in the eighty-fourth year of her age.

MRS. REBECCA WILKINSON.

A long life invariably consecrated to the service of religion, entitles this lady to the grateful remembrance of myriads. Her father, a respectable merchant of Dublin, where she was born, in 1753, having died while she was young, the family came to England, which was thus enriched with one of its best benefactors. At the age of fifteen she was admitted into the Baptist church in Unicorn Yard, having been baptised by the Rev. Josiah Thompson, though the pastor of the church was Mr. Samuel Clarke, who afterwards removed to Exeter. In the year 1772, she joined the

flock in Little Wild Street, which enjoyed the episcopal care of Dr. Samuel Stennet.

While yet young, she commenced that course of benevolent zeal which she pursued to the end of her days. The Establishment of the Sunday-school system was an event in which she took a lively interest; and that gave rise to a correspondence with Mr. Robert Raikes, the estimable founder. Many a subordinate institution, identical in its object with the society formed in the metropolis, in 1785, sprung up beneath her fostering care. She rightly esteemed the knowledge of Christianity requisite in training the heart to virtue and happiness; nor could she forget that the stages of human existence, immediately subsequent to childhood, offer pre-eminent facilities for rendering that knowledge permanent and influential. Long before the foundation of the Religious Tract Society, or the opening of Mrs. Hannah More's cheap repository, she began a series of publications amounting to about forty articles. The first of which, entitled in some editions, "The Great Question," has, with several others, been discontinued. It was taken, in 1775, from Dr. Watts's "Humble Attempt towards the Revival of Practical Religion," in which he grafts a diversity of wholesome instructions on the words, "What do ye more than others?" The whole work is a specimen of those searching appeals, which she wished to prevail in all serious writings, discourses, and self-examinations, and which characterize the works found in her adopted list.

Six-and-twenty years before her death, she opened her residence to a monthly party, consisting of such

ladies and gentlemen as were known to her before, or were suitably introduced. The design was, to elicit important facts and sentiments, such as ought to engage the children of God, and the heirs of a blessed immortality. Were the subjects which they considered to be announced here in the order of their discussion, it would be seen, that in their bearing on the essence and power of religion, they were wisely progressive. The oftener the parties met, the more deeply they appear to have been convinced that time was precious, and that in the consumption of it, their minds ought to be directed to the highest attainable point of Christian edification.

Her course was cheerful, and her end was peace. For though the decision of her character, and her systematic course of life, sometimes made her appear abrupt and unaccommodating, those who knew her best were charmed by her society, and warmly attached to her person, as one who lived not to herself, but to God and his church.

The pains of a long illness she never knew; but after riding out, the preceding day, she was removed, in the midst of her usefulness and Christian friendships, on the 27th of December, 1828, in the seventy-sixth year of her age. That she made no noise in the world, was honourable to the purity of her motives; for she possessed sufficient intellect and vigour to have pushed her into greater notoriety, had she not studied that concealment, the inculcation of which is one of the brightest evidences of the divinity of our religion. The use she made of her fortune places her in striking contrast with many of her sex, though, hap-

pily, she has sisters who are imitators. In the great day of account, she will show the truth of the remark made by another Christian woman, "What I had, I leave behind me; but how I held it, I carry with me."

Numerous schools, instituted for the instruction of poor children in the way of heaven, and half a million of publications, to direct her fellow creatures to the Saviour of their souls, will not be forgotten, when a cup of cold water given for the sake of Christ, will be remembered by the Judge of all the earth.

CONCLUSION.

If, in bringing this History to a close, we naturally glance back to the commencement of Dissent, whether in the church of Christ at large, or our own country in particular, on what period shall we fix? Soon there arose parties among the primitive Christians; and though the apostles uttered the oracle of the Holy Spirit on the question concerning the obligation of the Levitical law, they taught the Christians to exercise forbearance, till Providence terminated the dispute, rendering the observance of the ceremonies impossible, by the destruction of the Jewish temple and state. Disputes between the eastern and western churches quickly followed, and either party might have called the other Dissenters.

But where no state authority, or physical force, interposes, like "chaos, to end the strife," differences are comparatively harmless, and will usually, by stimulating to increased study of the Scriptures, promote the cause of piety through the knowledge of the mind of God. It was not till a civil establishment of religion was gradually created by the authority of Constantine, that dissent, in the more modern sense of the term, arose; for though some have said that Jeroboam and the ten tribes were the first dissenters, the wor-

ship of the golden calves was the established religion of Israel, and the king was the head of that church; while dissent, if it dates so far back, must be found with Elijah and the seven thousand who had not bowed the knee to Baal, when the prophet thought himself the single dissenter from the false religion of his country. But as Constantine's establishment ended in all the corruptions of Popery, so it began by creating dissent; for which there was too much reason, as may be seen by the speedy triumphs of Arianism, that was at one time the established religion, and the orthodoxy of Athanasius the dissent. Had there been, from the first, a strong party to protest against the unscriptural novelty of a state church, the subsequent corruption might have been prevented; and had we the history of the Donatists written by themselves, we might find that the violence of the dominant party, which crushed them, inflicted a calamity upon the cause of religion.

The Nestorian Dissenters from the Greek church, carried with them into the East many evidences of a religion as pure, to say the least, as that of the establishment by which they were expelled. But, in Europe, the Waldenses will be admitted, by real Protestants, to have been at once the dissenting and the true church, though hidden in the wilderness. After the taking of Constantinople by the Turks, the Christians were dissenters from the establishment of Islam, of which the metropolitan cathedral was the mosque of St. Sophia.

But, to turn to our own country, Wickliffe and the

Lollards were the first dissenters from the state church of England; and when Henry the Eighth, after winning his title of Defender of the Faith, by writing against Luther, kept it while imitating him, by warring against the Pope; it is difficult to say whether Papacy or the Reformation were the establishment or dissent. What had been called by emphasis *the* church, certainly became dissenter, under Edward the Sixth, though Mary made it again the established religion, and Protestantism a dissent.

The Roman hierarchy exulted that the south of Europe escaped the contagion of the northern heresy; for they had quenched the flame of reformation with blood. But if, by the extinction of dissenters, all was peace, it was the peace of the grave; and Spain, Portugal, and Italy, commenced a career of decay and ruin, from which France escaped, by the agitation that Protestantism, the French dissent, created. To her religious conflicts Holland owed her greatness, scarcely less than miraculous.

From the reign of Elizabeth may be dated the rise of the English dissent. For though the Puritans, who derived their name from efforts to obtain a more thorough purification of our country from the relics of Romanism, than the rest of the nation desired, had remained in the bosom of the new church; when they returned from the Marian exile, confirmed and increased in their tendencies, by residence among foreign Protestants, they hoped to find Elizabeth favourable to their views. Disappointed, they commenced the movements which ended in a separation

from the Protestant establishment. But the Act of Uniformity, passed after the restoration of Charles II., may be said to have given a second birth to dissent, by an attempt to terminate its existence. The Toleration Act, under William III., did but yield the consent of the state to the continuance of that which it was found impossible to prevent, or to exterminate.

The hierarchy had stimulated and encouraged the persecuting authorities, by sagaciously prophecying that dissent would be the thing of a day; but we have now brought down its history to our own times, through upwards of a hundred and fifty years of legalised existence, added to a hundred and fifty more of legalised tyranny and persecution. The sinister predictions of ruin to our country, if any other than the religion established by law should be suffered to exist, have been falsified by a course of improvement and prosperity, which has kept pace with the progress of dissent; and if new prospects are opening to our country of illimitable advancement, who can compare the past and present history of dissenters, without seeing in the distant future the inevitable triumph of their liberal principles?

That the history of such a people forms a study for the church of God, both friends and foes must admit. For where can we behold a course of events equally interesting and instructive? In all other countries, dissent has either been extinguished by persecution, or has been suffered to exist, because it has been inert and unprofitable, neither shaming the sluggishness of an established clergy, nor alarming their fears by

the zealous propagation of hostile views. The Protestants of France, not extinguished by the revocation of the Edict of Nantz, created little alarm to the Catholics, because the reformed religion was too much like that of the English Presbyterians, which forms, not the vital principle, but the dead weight of our dissent; and if the French Protestants are now offending and alarming by their activity, it is from our altars that they have kindled their fire. Taught by our example, they will not repeat their ancient error, of forming a political party under princes of the blood, and will, by improving the spirituality of their churches, increase their zeal and their power.

The Remonstrants and Menonites of Holland have never put their liberal government to a severe test, by the encroachments on an established church which an active and vigorous dissent must produce; but as there are recent accounts of the rise of such a party in that country, so we have reason to fear lest the government should fling away its noblest reputation by indulging in a spirit of persecution. Time will show whether the new Dutch dissent, like the English, inspired with the indomitable spirit of the martyrs, will carry the ardour of youth into combination with the wisdom, and vigour, and usefulness of an advanced age.

In our own country, the opposite party never exhibited any thing that could compare with that history which we are bringing to a close. The iron hand of the Protectorate crushed the Episcopalians, under the insufficient pretence that they were vanquished poli-

tical opponents; while Dr. Owen, the independent Vice Chancellor of Oxford, did honour to his own communion, by suffering a congregation to celebrate the liturgic worship opposite to his own door; and the reservation of a third of the livings for the support of the ejected incumbents, was a noble contrast to the heartless persecution that would have starved out the two thousand Nonconformists. But we are left to judge of the spirit of Episcopalian dissent, not by their short history during the Commonwealth, but by the conduct of the Nonjurors, after the revolution. Though the highest dignitaries assisted to create this dissent, a short-lived individual might have said, with Grattan, "I sat by its cradle: I followed its hearse." The spirit of the hierarchy showed itself unable to brook trials far inferior to those over which, either the primitive Christians, or the Nonepiscopalian dissenters, have triumphed. The Scotch episcopal dissenting church has dragged on a lazy and unprofitable existence, which just serves as a foil to the other dissenters who have alarmed the Scotch establishment for its very existence. The liberality that the descendants of the pilgrim fathers have displayed in the United States of America, has given to their episcopal church no opportunity of showing, whether they could maintain and diffuse their principles, not only without a state establishment, but in defiance of its oppressions and exactions. The continuance and increase of the Irish Catholics can scarcely be brought into this comparison; for though the persecuting spirit of Protestants has torn from their own brow the crown, to place it on the head of their

opponents, these have been animated with the spirit of an established church, and have been dissenters by force rather than by choice.

The religious history of our island, not to say of the world, presents, therefore, nothing so interesting as the fortunes of dissent. It has survived a long and embittered persecution, that has, now revelled in blood, now refused to open the doors of its prison-house, now yielding toleration with a grudge, and never ceasing to employ the pride of power and the corruption of wealth, "to wear out the saints of the Most High." Emerging into legal security, Dissenters have experienced the usual attacks of error, more dangerous than persecution, and the original host has become almost extinct; but a second secession, by which the Independents advanced farther than the Presbyterians from the Church of England, has preserved the vitality of the body, and achieved more than the original victory, by maintaining Christian purity amidst the seductive blandishments of peace.

But the activity of Dissenters is their glory. When, by the fatal peace of Westphalia, Protestants consented to keep within their own limits, and leave others to the sway of a religion which they themselves had denounced; their selfishness defeated its own end, and the Catholics constantly encroached on the Protestants; but the Dissenters, neither openly nor tacitly entering into such a compact, regarded the kingdom as their parish, or rather said, "the earth is the Lord's," and it is ours to reduce it to his sway. This spirit of aggression, to use a modern phrase, was at once justified and promoted by the state into which

the Establishment fell, after the ejectment of the two thousand. That Gospel which they preached was, for the next century, banished from their former pulpits, and Christian compassion impelled the inheritors of their principles, to go into the moral wilderness and seek after the sheep that were left without a shepherd. The most zealous of the Dissenters aimed, indeed, directly at the propagation of pure Christianity, rather than Nonconformity; but the result was more, rather than less, auspicious to dissent. A man, ignorant of real religion, is repelled by a direct attack upon his sect; but when his heart is won to the Saviour, he naturally turns towards the fold of that pastor who has led him to the chief Shepherd and Bishop of souls. It is in this way that the Dissenters have both won and kept their flocks. Very rare in dissenting pulpits is a direct assertion of their own principles, and still more rare a direct attack on the Establishment; but the preaching of Christ crucified, and a constant appeal to the Scriptures, as the only authority and guide in religion, multiply Dissenters in the holiest and most pacific way. A member of one of their churches enters there for the edification of his own soul, and remains there, because he has learned the nature and value of his new principles by practice.

To the rise of the Methodists has been ascribed the activity and increase of the elder bodies of Dissenters; but with scarcely partial truth. The assertion reversed would be more near the mark. The Dissenters had purchased by their labours, their tears, and their blood, the open field of religious freedom, into which the Methodists entered. Nonconformists had set

the example of going into the highways and hedges to compel men to come in to the gospel feast.

That Whitfield learned much by mingling with the Dissenters of Great Britain and America, and that he virtually adopted their principles, is well known; but it is equally certain, though not generally noticed, that Westley struck the grand stroke of employing lay preachers, which has given such extension to his Society, at the suggestion of his mother, the daughter of Dr. Annesley, a Nonconformist minister. When, with the hierarchical spirit of his father, *he* opposed the preaching of a layman, *she*, in the spirit of *her* father, said, "John, that man is as much called of God to preach as you are." He had discernment enough to see which of his parents knew most of religion; and his mother had the pleasure of seeing her son adopt a system, which has done so much to break down the monopoly of an established priesthood that had expelled her father.

That the Methodists have furnished a noble stimulus to the Dissenters, we ought gratefully to acknowledge; though Darracott had caught from Doddridge the spirit that filled the vicinity of Wellington with the knowledge of Christ, before he welcomed Whitfield to that town with open arms. Numerous were the scenes in which the old Dissenters were, at that time, pursuing, on a smaller scale, the career by which Westley and Whitfield convulsed the realm. It is, however, a remarkable phenomenon, that the new societies, which scarcely acknowledged themselves Dissenters, should have given the mightiest impulse to dissent. If the Methodists have narrowed the field

of avowed dissent, by preoccupying many parts, they have not been able to check within their own body the progress of principles which they are themselves reducing to practice, while the numerous separations from the old connexion are swelling the numbers of those, who, thinking dissent no crime, make it no secret.

In fact, if the vital principles that are essential to salvation, first gave to the Dissenters the elements of enduring strength, that no persecution could subdue, their divisions, which seemed their weakness, preserved them when error came in as a flood. Had the Presbyterians been the only dissenting body, there was a time when all might have been lost. But the Independents, among whom the Baptists are included, not only retained the orthodox faith, but saved some of the Presbyterian congregations from error. For the act of fraternisation, which gave to two communions the name of the United Brethren, exchanged the stricter spirit of Presbyterianism for much of the liberty of the Independents, whose orthodox ministers were preferred as pastors for Presbyterian congregations, when the ministers of their own body became suspected. In some instances, a whole congregation came over to the Independent body, for the sake of preserving evangelical truth.

The spirit of independency has, indeed, gone abroad through the communions that have not adopted the theory; so that it is difficult, if not impossible, for any of them to practice imposition upon conscience, since the attempt is sure to lead to a virtually independent separation. That this is no calamity, every candid

inspector of ecclesiastical affairs may admit. For as the love of power, which leads to its abuse, is natural to the human heart, so the domination of a hierarchy has, in every form, done mischief. Waiving all mention of Rome, or of the English Establishment, we may observe, that the Presbyterians, under the Commonwealth, damaged their own cause by intolerance; and when merely tolerated themselves, ruined it by error. It was, therefore, in mercy that the Quakers were allowed to create an ultra dissent; for they aimed a deadly blow at the papacy of a priesthood, and thus carried the principles of independency to great lengths in one direction, while they formed a kind of presbyterianism in another.

Sects are now, however, too numerous to persecute each other, or be persecuted by the hierarchy; for the state never persecutes, except as goaded on by the church. If rivalship is created, the mischief is perhaps smaller than the benefit; for it stimulates to activity, which usually finds a more promising and fruitful field among the neglected, ignorant, and profane, than among those who are already gathered into another body. We have seen, indeed, that the older dissenting communions are drawn into friendly feeling and harmonious co-operation.

Religious liberty, then, is so far safe, that what used to be called the great Diana of the Independents, is considered the Palladium of all, and is the avowed idol of philosophers and statesmen. They who broached the sentiment, and by their sufferings secured its triumphs, may well rejoice to see others in the enjoyment of its benefits. But the old question is thus

exchanged for a new one. As it is no longer debated whether any religion should be suffered to exist separate from that of the state; it is now to be decided whether one church shall continue dominant over others, or, by the triumphs of religious equality merged into the common mass, be left, like all others, to rise by its own excellence, or sink by its dead weight.

The success of this experiment in America will probably decide the question all over the world. For the spirit with which the persecuted Dissenters founded that mighty empire, promises, or threatens, as some would say, to teach mankind great lessons. Meanwhile, Ireland at our own doors, and under the sway of our own government, is on the eve of demonstrating the impossibility of chaining the ocean, or compelling the many to submit to the domination of the religion of a few. There seems no hope of escaping one of the horns of the dilemma, but by falling on the other —the Catholic church must become if not *the* established, at least, *an* established one—or the principle of an establishment must be abandoned, and all religions placed on an equality. The dread of the example furnished to this country may defer the decision, till it is too late to be beneficial; but it must come at last.

That the Catholic church should be established, may seem preferable in the eyes of some statesmen, and not a few churchmen too; but it would create opposition so determined, from a multifarious and vigorous coalition, that he must be a reckless, rather than adventurous statesman, who would make the attempt; for the horror created by the fires which Mary kindled

in Smithfield, still lives, and though the most enlightened and cordial friends of religious liberty wish to see Catholics placed on a level with all other Christians, such men are, perhaps, the farthest from consenting to unite with the state, a church that has never abjured the principle, nor, where it possessed the power, ceased from the practice of persecution.

The Dissenters, with all their determined Protestantism, are not the only enemies to a papal establishment. The Catholics themselves, or at least their most politic and influential leaders, would dread such a consummation; aware that they would then exchange active ministers that have gained the ascendancy in consequence of depending on the people; for a priesthood, which, leaning on the government, would first render their prize worthless by indolence, and then let it be wrested from their grasp, by some active body of Protestants, which would win the hearts the Catholics had lost. Nor should it be unnoticed, that what is called the Puseyite party in the church of England, which leans strongly towards Popery, seems, like the Catholics, to have learned from the Dissenters a jealousy of a state alliance, which it terms, at best but an accident, and at worst a upas tree, that poisons and withers the church.

There is, then, but one course open, the cutting of the gordian knot, the dissolution of the connexion between church and state, to leave religion where it stood in the first and best ages which the church ever knew. They who dread this as destruction, betray a suspicion of their own cause. For why must the church of England expire, not where Dissenters have

lived, and flourished, and triumphed (God forbid, she should ever be placed there), but where Dissenters behold in prospect their *el Dorado*, the promised land of milk and honey, the fruit and reward of all their toils? That an episcopal church could live on an equality with others, is proved by the example of America, where it is the most determined foe to a connexion with the state.

But as the mass of mankind is occupied with present advantages, few of the Dissenters look forward to the ultimate consequences of that struggle which their forefathers commenced; nor do they trouble themselves about the evils of a state church, till she forces them to think, by making them feel. They are contented to pursue a course of usefulness, which is the best security against a dominant heirarchy, whether Papal or Protestant. By their colleges, their schools, their missions, and their publications, they are changing the character, and deciding the fortunes of their country. For, that the original ground of dissent, the want of a thorough reformation from Popery, was valid, the body of the Oxford Tracts may be said to prove; and what would have been the course of affairs, had there been no active and vigorous dissent, which impels the nation in the opposite direction?

It remains, then, that Dissenters seek the fulfilment of their imperative duties, and, patiently pursuing attainable objects, expect the ultimate triumph of their cause. Their vocation is the defence of religious liberty, by the practical application of its most valuable benefits; the maintaining of an unflinching testimony to the sole authority of Christ in the church

as exhibited in the sacred Scriptures; the active exercise of a benevolent zeal for the salvation of our uninstructed and unchristian population, and the improvement of the advantages which Britain enjoys for the evangelization of the world. In the fearless and untiring pursuit of these objects, of which they need not be ashamed, and which few will dare to impugn or despise, they may confidently expect that the omnipotent Governor of the church, and the world, will put them in possession of all that they ought to desire. As our "times are in his hands," so "he that believeth shall not make haste."

But while we are kept waiting for what we know to be just to ourselves, and what we ought to desire as beneficial to others; our interest, as well as our duty, calls us to study to "speak the truth in love." If our opponents are mistaken in their opposition, they are so much the greater sufferers, that they demand our compassion, rather than our anger. They may blame us as the cause of dissention, but we know that to cease from "contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," would leave our country either to the stagnation of death, or to be torn with other strifes, that would lead to no good result. To desist from our pursuit when within sight of the goal, is impossible; to become benevolent under the animation of hope, is as natural as it is desirable. They who have so far conquered public opinion should despair of nothing; and while statesmen have been taught to admit, that, in a new country no religion should be established, but all be left free to avail themselves of their own resources, we may expect

them at length to devise the best way of retracing the false step which the old governments should never have taken.

The desiderata that demand the efforts of Dissenters are numerous; but not all equally pressing and important. The removal of the bishops from the House of Lords has been attempted by politicians of their own church, and is not dreaded, but desired, by many who are most anxious for its genuine prosperity. To Dissenters it is of no further importance than as senatorial bishops are a violation of religious equality, and their presence among the Lords is a sure pledge for continued opposition to religious liberty. The extinction of tithes, by their appropriation to the welfare of the state, in the relief and education of the poor, may be expected in Ireland where the war is already begun; nor can it be long ere the same course is adopted in the rest of the empire.

But the church rates are now the apple of strife, and like the apples of Sodom, they fill those who consume them with disappointment and disgust. The abolition of them in Ireland was accompanied with prophecies of their speedy extinction in England. Would that they who uttered the prediction had laboured for its fulfilment! For while the government has at last devised a mode of providing an unobjectionable substitute for the unjust and offensive impost, and the church has spurned this peace-offering; the rates are refused in many parishes; legal proceedings are going on in others; and the goods, not only of Dissenters, but of Churchmen, are seized for payment. The strife and irritation created by this contest must be

deplored by every Christian, but can terminate, only with the impost itself.

The jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical courts over Dissenters renders religious liberty a mockery. The attempt of Lord Brougham to abolish these courts, as a nuisance, has for the present failed; but Dissenters may justly demand, that if Churchmen choose to continue under the jurisdiction of their own courts, they who have renounced that church should no longer be subject to its laws. The most provoking use has lately been made of these judicatories, so abhorrent from the spirit of the British constitution. A poor widow has recently been prosecuted for an inscription on her husband's tombstone; and two dissenting churchwardens are now imprisoned, really for not going to church, though one was ostensibly punished for not finding the sacramental elements, after he had called a vestry, and the parish had refused to find the means. These cases seem designed to produce the effects that have followed, a general indignation, and an abhorrence of the inquisitorial courts, terminating in the conviction expressed by the Baptist Board, that an established church is so essentially opposed to religious liberty, that it is the duty of all Dissenters to seek the dissolution of the alliance between church and state.

That the English universities should be open to all, as are those of Scotland, and of most of the continental states, is justly demanded. The same authority which transferred these national institutions from the Catholic to the Protestant establishment, should, now that the church of England has ceased to be the church of the nation, open all public seminaries to

the use of the whole population. A clergyman has published a proposal for allowing the parochial buildings to be used, at different times, for the worship of the various religious societies in the parish. But, that the burying grounds should be equally free to all, with the use of their own rites, is so manifestly just, that, when the Catholics of Ireland took this liberty by force of arms, the government left them in undisputed possession. Why should the Dissenters of England be deprived of this privilege? Is it good policy to reward a forcible seizure of rights, and punish a patient endurance of wrongs?

There are minor grievances that we have no inclination to enumerate; but so various and vexatious are the violations of religious liberty, by public authorities, and private bodies and individuals, that no one should wonder if Dissenters cannot forget, that the root of all these evils is the assumption of a right of one class of religionists to domineer over others, by enriching its own church from the public revenues, and arming it with the terrors of law? For whatever may be the number and influence of those who would scorn to use this power to inflict injuries on others, there are so many still left who think the value of it lies in the opportunity it affords to persecute and oppress, that the sufferings of Dissenters, and the heart-burnings created among those who ought to be friends, are the smallest part of the evil; so that philanthropy should join with Christianity to snatch from hands that are sure to abuse it, a monopoly that brings upon its possessors incalculable guilt.

All religious parties have the mightiest motives for

employing those energies that they have turned against each other, on the immense mass of ignorance that we ought to have instructed, and of profaneness that we ought long ago to have vanquished by force of Christian truth. The restoration of the happy primitive state of the Church, when it was neither defiled by secular contact, nor divided in heart by the domination of one party over another, would indeed advance its beneficent operations; but we should still have to pray for the extinction of all differences of sentiment and practice, as far as this is attainable in a world where knowledge is partial, and can scarcely ever be equal; and where religion, being imperfect, cannot enjoy its consummate triumphs. While we are but waiting for admission into the immediate presence of "God, who is light, and with whom is no darkness at all," we can no more expect union without differences, than bliss without alloy.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

A SURVEY, by a former agent of the City Mission, which was not completed when the Chapter on the external state of Dissenters was sent to the press, is given in the Appendix, as it is known to have been most carefully made, and to have rather underrated the provision for public worship among Dissenters. It includes the cities of London and Westminster, and the five adjacent boroughs, a population of 1,434,868 souls.

	Population.	Dissenting Chapels.	Sittings.
City of London	122,709	47	31,814
City of Westminster	202,460	38	21,119
Marylebone	240,294	76	69,247
Finsbury	224,839	58	35,945
Tower Hamlets	355,836	107	55,050
Southwark	134,117	40	20,540
Lambeth	154,613	42	23,943
	1,434,868	408	257,658

No. II.

SCHEDULES APPENDED TO THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS APPOINTED TO INQUIRE INTO REGISTERS OF BIRTHS OR BAPTISMS, MARRIAGES AND DEATHS, OR BURIALS, OTHER THAN THE PAROCHIAL REGISTERS.

Schedule A. is devoted to the registers of the French, and other Foreign Protestants, who have had thirty-seven congregations in various parts of the kingdom; eighteen of these have been dissolved, and the rest, we imagine, are fast melting away.

Schedule B. occupies eighty-one folio pages, and contains lists of

the registers of the three denominations in England and Wales. This is a highly valuable document, and supplies much interesting information.

2,252 registers, &c. have been deposited by 168 Presbyterians, 1,200 Independents, and 424 Baptist congregations.

Schedule C. is devoted to the Wesleyan Methodist connexion, registers, and to those of the bodies that have separated from them.

The list of Wesleyan Methodists occupies twenty-nine folio pages, and unites 707 places in England and Wales, from which 872 registers, &c. have been received.

The New Connexion Methodists have sent fifty-seven registers from forty-seven places of worship.

The Primitive Methodists have sent ninety-three volumes from ninety congregations.

The Bible Christians have delivered in twenty-eight registers from as many circuits.

The Inghamites have sent seven registers from seven chapels in York and Lancaster.

Schedule D. The Moravians have deposited thirteen volumes of registers from ten congregations.

Schedule E. The Countess of Huntingdon's connexion have furnished-sixty three volumes from forty-six congregations.

Schedule F. The Calvinistic Methodists have sent thirty-five volumes from thirty-one congregations in England, and 390 volumes from 398 congregations in Wales.

Schedule G. The Swedenborgians have sent in thirty-one volumes of registers, from twenty-two congregations.

Schedule H. The Red Cross Street registry consists of three series of certificates; the first, on parchment, from the year 1742 to 1837, inclusive, which are deposited in thirty boxes; all, excepting two, containing 1000 each, and amounting to 30,417 entries of births. The second series consists of paper certificates of an improved form, from 1828 to 1837; these are bound in thirty-three volumes, each containing 500 entries, making together 16,500 entries of births. The third series is supplemental, in four volumes, containing 2,058 entries of births, extending over the year 1837; making a grand total of 48,975 registers. Besides these there is a volume which contains the records of 830 baptisms and seven births.

Schedule I. Red Cross Street Library. Seventeen registers of baptisms, burials, &c., of Dissenting ministers and churches that have been deposited with the trustees for safety.

Schedule K. The General Registry of the Wesleyan Methodists, kept at 66, Paternoster Row. This extends from the year 1818 to 1838, and contains forty-two bundles of certificates of births and baptisms, from No. 1 to 10,291. The registrar, Thomas Cordeaux.

Schedule L. Cemetries. Four registers from Ecclesall and Leeds, Yorkshire; Everton, Liverpool; and East Street, Walworth.

Schedule P. Society of Friends, have 1441 volumes of registers of births, marriages and deaths, belonging to ninety monthly meetings of the society.

Schedule Q. Bunhill Fields Register Books, of burials in that cemetery, are thirty-one volumes; extending from 1st April, 1713, to the present time.

The result has been the transmission to our board of about 7000 registers from 3,630 religious congregations, viz.

The Foreign Protestant churches	37
The Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists	2,264
The Wesleyan Methodists in their several branches	818
The Moravians	10
The Lady Huntingdon's Connexion	44
The Calvinistic Methodists	436
The Swedenborgians	21
Total	3630

No. III.

AN ACT TO REPEAL CERTAIN ACTS, AND AMEND OTHER ACTS RELATING TO RELIGIOUS WORSHIP AND ASSEMBLIES AND PERSONS TEACHING OR PREACHING THEREIN.—52 George III. c. 155.

29th July, 1812.

"WHEREAS it is expedient that certain acts of parliament, made in the reign of his late Majesty King Charles the Second, relating to Nonconformists and Conventicles, and refusing to take oaths, should be repealed, and that the laws relating to certain congregations and assemblies for religious worship, and persons teaching,

preaching, or officiating therein, and resorting thereto, should be amended;" Be it therefore enacted by the King's most excellent majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, in this present parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, that from and after the passing of this act, an act of parliament made in the session of parliament held in the thirteenth and fourteenth years of his late Majesty King Charles the Second, intituled, "An Act for preventing the Mischiefs and Dangers that may arise by certain persons called Quakers, and others refusing to take lawful Oaths;" and another act of parliament made in the seventeenth year of the reign of his late Majesty king Charles the Second, intituled, "An Act for restraining Nonconformists from inhabiting in Corporations;" and another act of parliament made in the twenty-second year of the reign of the late King Charles the Second, intituled, "An Act to prevent and suppress seditious Conventicles," shall be and the same are hereby repealed.

II. And be it further enacted, that, from and after the passing of this act, no congregation or assembly for religious worship of Protestants (at which there shall be present more than twenty persons besides the immediate family and servants of the person in whose house or upon whose premises such meeting, congregation, or assembly shall be had, shall be permitted or allowed, unless or until the place of such meeting, if the same shall not have been duly certified and registered under any former act or acts of parliament relating to registering places of religious worship, shall have been or shall be certified to the bishop of the diocese, or to the archdeacon of the archdeaconry, or to the justices of the peace at the general or quarter-sessions of the peace for the county, riding, division, city, town, or place in which such meeting shall he held; and all places of meeting which shall be so certified to the bishops' or archdeacons' court, shall be returned by such court once in each year to the quarter sessions of the county, riding, division, city, town or place; and all places of meeting which shall be so certified to the quarter-sessions of the peace, shall be also returned once in each year to the bishop or archdeacon; and all such places shall be registered in the said bishops' or archdeacons' court respectively, and recorded at the said general or quarter sessions; the registrar or clerk of the peace whereof respectively is hereby required to register and record the same; and the bishop or registrar or clerk of the peace to whom any such place of meeting shall be certified

under this act, shall give a certificate thereof to such person or persons as shall request or demand the same, for which there shall be no greater fee nor reward taken than two shillings and sixpence; and every person who shall knowingly permit or suffer any such congregation or assembly as aforesaid to meet in any place occupied by him, until the same shall have been so certified as aforesaid, shall forfeit for every time any such congregation or assembly shall meet contrary to the provisions of this act, a sum not exceeding twenty pounds, nor less than twenty shillings, at the discretion of the justices who shall convict for such offence.

III. Provided always, and be it further enacted, that every person who shall teach or preach in any congregation or assembly as aforesaid, in any place, without the consent of the occupier thereof, shall forfeit for every such offence any sum not exceeding thirty pounds, nor less than forty shillings, at the discretion of the justices who shall convict for such offence.

IV. And be it further enacted, that from and after the passing of this act, every person who shall teach or preach at, or officiate in, or shall resort to any congregation or congregations, assembly or assemblies for religious worship of Protestants, whose place of meeting shall be duly certified according to the provisions of this act, or any other act or acts of parliament relating to the certifying or registering of places of religious worship, shall be exempt from all such pains or penalties under any act or acts of parliament relating to religious worship, as any person who shall have taken the oaths, and made the declaration prescribed by or mentioned in an act, made in the first year of the reign of King William and Queen Mary, intituled, "An Act for exempting their Majesties' Protestant subjects dissenting from the Church of England, from the Penalties of certain Laws," or any act amending the said Act, is by law exempt, as fully and effectually as if all such pains and penalties, and the several acts enforeing the same, were recited in this act, and such exemptions as aforesaid were severally and separately enacted in relation thereto.

V. Provided always, and be it further enacted, that every person not having taken the oaths and subscribed the declaration hereinafter specified, who shall preach or teach at any place of religious worship certified in pursuance of the directions of this act, shall, when thereto required by any one justice of the peace, by any writing under his hand or signed by him, take and make and subscribe, in the presence of such justice of the peace, the oath and

declarations specified and contained in an act, passed in the nineteenth year of the reign of his majesty King George the Third, intituled, " An Act for the further Relief of Protestant Dissenting Ministers and Schoolmasters;" and no such person who, upon being so required to take such oaths and make such declaration as aforesaid, shall refuse to attend the justice requiring the same, or to take and make and subscribe such oaths and declaration as aforesaid, shall be thereafter permitted or allowed to teach or preach in any such congregation or assembly for religious worship, until he shall have taken such oaths, and made such declaration as aforesaid, on pain of forfeiting, for every time he shall so teach or preach, any sum not exceeding ten pounds nor less than ten shillings, at the discretion of the justice convicting for such offence.

VI. Provided always, and be it further enacted, that no person shall be required by any justice of the peace to go to any greater distance than five miles from his own home, or from the place where he shall be residing at the time of such requisition, for the purpose of taking such oaths as aforesaid.

VII. And be it further enacted, that it shall be lawful for any of his majesty's Protestant subjects to appear before any one justice of the peace, and to produce to such justice of the peace a printed or written copy of the said oaths and declaration, and to require such justice to administer such oaths and to tender such declaration to be made, taken, and subscribed by such person; and thereupon it shall be lawful for such justice, and he is hereby authorized and required to administer such oaths and to tender such declaration to the person requiring to take and make and subscribe the same; and such person shall take and make and subscribe such oaths and declaration in the presence of such justice accordingly; and such justice shall attest the same to be sworn before him, and shall transmit or deliver the same to the clerk of the peace for the county, riding, division, city, town, or place for which he shall act as such justice of the peace, before or at the next general or quarter sessions of the peace for such county, riding, division, city, town, or place.

VIII. And be it further enacted, that every justice of the peace before whom any person shall make and take and subscribe such oaths and declaration as aforesaid, shall forthwith give to the person having taken, made and subscribed such oaths and declaration, a certificate thereof under the hand of such justice, in the form following; that is to say,

"I *A. B.* one of his majesty's justices of the peace for the county, [riding, division, city, or town, or place, *as the case may be*] of do hereby certify, That *C. D.* of, &c. [*describing the Christian and Surname, and place of abode of the party*] did this day appear before me, and did make and take and subscribe the several oaths and declaration specified in an act, made in the fifty-second year of the reign of King George the Third, intituled, [*set forth the title of this act*] Witness my hand this day of one thousand eight hundred and . And for the making and signing of which certificate, where the said oaths and declaration are taken and made on the requisition of the party taking and making the same, such justice shall be entitled to demand and have a fee of two shillings and sixpence, and no more; and such certificate shall be conclusive evidence that the party named therein has made and taken the oaths and subscribed the declaration in manner required by this act.

IX. And be it further enacted, that every person who shall teach or preach in any such congregation or assembly, or congregations or assemblies as aforesaid, who shall employ himself solely in the duties of a teacher, or preacher, and not follow or engage in any trade or business, or other profession, occupation, or employment, for his livelihood, except that of a schoolmaster, and who shall produce a certificate of some justice of the peace, of his having taken and made and subscribed the oaths and declaration aforesaid, shall be exempt from the civil services and offices specified in the said recited act passed in the first year of King William and Queen Mary, and from being balloted to serve and from serving in the militia or local militia of any county, town, parish or place in any part of the United Kingdom.

X. And be it further enacted, that every person who shall produce any false or untrue certificate or paper, as and for a true certificate of his having made and taken the oaths and subscribed the declaration by this act required for the purpose of claiming any exemption from civil or military duties as aforesaid, under the provisions of this or any other act or acts of parliament, shall forfeit for every such offence the sum of fifty pounds; which penalty may be recovered by and to the use of any person who will sue for the same by any action of debt, bill, plaint, or information in any of his Majesty's courts of Record at Westminster, or the courts of great sessions in Wales, or the courts of the counties palatine of Chester, Lancaster and Durham (as the case shall require); wherein

no essoign, privilege, protection or wager of law, or more than one imparlance shall be allowed.

XI. And be it further enacted, that no meeting, assembly, or congregation of persons for religious worship, shall be had in any place with the door locked, bolted, or barred, or otherwise fastened, so as to prevent any persons entering therein during the time of any such meeting, assembly, or congregation; and the person teaching or preaching at such meeting, assembly, or congregation, shall forfeit for every time any such meeting, assembly, or congregation shall be held with the door locked, bolted, barred, or otherwise fastened as aforesaid, any sum not exceeding twenty pounds, nor less than forty shillings, at the discretion of the justices convicting for such offence.

XII. And be it further enacted, that if any person or persons, at any time after the passing of this act, do and shall wilfully and maliciously or contemptuously disquiet or disturb any meeting, assembly, or congregation of persons assembled for religious worship, permitted or authorized by this act, or any former act or acts of parliament, or shall in any way disturb, molest, or misuse any preacher, teacher, or person officiating at such meeting, assembly, or congregation, or any person or persons there assembled, such person or persons so offending upon proof thereof before any justice of the peace by two or more credible witnesses, shall find two sureties to be bound by recognizances in the penal sum of fifty pounds to answer for such offence, and in default of such sureties shall be committed to prison, there to remain till the next general or quarter sessions; and upon conviction of the said offence at the general or quarter sessions, shall suffer the pain and penalty of forty pounds.

XIII. Provided always, and be it further enacted, that nothing in this act contained, shall affect or be construed to affect the celebration of divine service according to the rites and ceremonies of the united Church of England and Ireland, by ministers of the said church, in any place hitherto used for such purpose, or being now or hereafter duly consecrated or licensed by any archbishop or bishop or other person lawfully authorized to consecrate or license the same, or to affect the jurisdiction of the archbishops or bishops or other persons exercising lawful authority in the church of the United Kingdom over the said church, according to the rules and discipline of the same, and to the laws and statutes of the realm; but such jurisdiction shall remain and continue as if this act had not passed.

XIV. Provided also, and be it further enacted, that nothing in this act contained shall extend or be construed to extend to the people usually called Quakers, nor to any meetings or assemblies for religious worship held or convened by such persons; or in any manner to alter or repeal or affect any act, other than and except the acts passed in the reign of king Charles the Second hereinbefore repealed, relating to the people called quakers, or relating to any assemblies or meetings for religious worship held by them.

XV. And be it further enacted, that every person guilty of any offence, for which any pecuniary penalty or forfeiture is imposed by this act, in respect of which no special provision is made, shall and may be convicted thereof by information upon the oath of any one or more credible witness or witnesses before any two or more justices of the peace acting in and for the county, riding, city, or place wherein such offence shall be committed; and that all and every the pecuniary penalties or forfeitures which shall be incurred or become payable for any offence or offences against this act, shall and may be levied by distress, under the hand and seal or hands and seals of two justices of peace for the county, riding, city, or place, in which any such offence or offences was or were committed, or where the forfeiture or forfeitures was or were incurred, and shall when levied be paid one moiety to the informer, and the other moiety to the poor of the parish in which the offence was committed; and in case of no sufficient distress whereby to levy the penalties, or any or either of them imposed by this act, it shall and may be lawful for any such justices respectively, before whom the offender or offenders shall be convicted, to commit such offender to prison for such time not exceeding three months, as the said justices in their discretion shall think fit.

XVI. And be it further enacted, that in case any person or persons who shall hereafter be convicted of any of the offences punishable by this act, shall conceive him, her or themselves to be aggrieved by such conviction, then and in every such case it shall and may be lawful for such person or persons respectively, and he she or they shall or may appeal to the general or quarter sessions of the peace, holden next after such conviction in and for the county, riding, city or place, giving unto the justices before whom such conviction shall be made, notice in writing within eight days after any such conviction, of his, her or their intention to prefer such appeal; and the said justices in their said general or quarter sessions shall and may, and they are hereby authorized and empowered to proceed to

the hearing and determination of the matter of such appeal, and to make such order therein, and to award such costs to be paid by and to either party, not exceeding forty shillings, as they in their discretion shall think fit.

XVII. And be it further enacted, that no penalty or forfeiture shall be recoverable under this act, unless the same shall be sued for, or the offence in respect of which the same is imposed is prosecuted before the justices of the peace or quarter sessions, within six months after the offence shall have been committed; and no person who shall suffer any imprisonment for nonpayment of any penalty shall thereafter be liable to the payment of such penalty or forfeiture.

XVIII. And be it further enacted, that if any action or suit shall be brought or commenced against any person or persons for any thing done in pursuance of this act, that every such action or suit shall be commenced within three months next after the fact committed, and not afterwards, and shall be laid and brought in the county wherein the cause or alleged cause of action shall have accrued, and not elsewhere; and the defendant or defendants in such action or suit may plead the general issue, and give this act, and the special matter in evidence on any trial to be had thereupon, and that the same was done in pursuance and by authority of this act; and if it shall appear so to be done, or if any such action or suit shall be brought after the time so limited for bringing the same, or shall be brought in any other county, city or place, that then and in such case the jury shall find for such defendant or defendants; and upon such verdict, or if the plaintiff or plaintiffs shall become nonsuited, or discontinue his, her or their action or actions, or if a verdict shall pass against the plaintiff or plaintiffs, or if, upon demurrer, judgment shall be given against the plaintiff or plaintiffs, the defendant or defendants shall have and may recover, treble costs, and have the like remedy for the same, as any defendant or defendants hath or have for costs of suit in other cases by law.

XIX. And be it further enacted, that this act shall be deemed and taken to be a public act, and shall be judicially taken notice of as such by all judges, justices, and others, without specially pleading the same.

No. IV.

AN ACT TO RELIEVE PERSONS WHO IMPUGN THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY TRINITY FROM CERTAIN PENALTIES.—53 George III. c. 160.

21*st July*, 1813.

" WHEREAS, in the nineteenth year of his present Majesty an act was passed, intituled, ' An Act for the further Relief of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers and Schoolmasters ;' and it is expedient to enact as hereinafter provided ;" Be it therefore further enacted by the King's most excellent majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, in this present parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, that so much of an act passed in the first year of the reign of King William and Queen Mary, intituled, " An act for exempting his Majesty's Protestant Subjects, dissenting from the Church of England, from the Penalties of certain Laws, as provides that that act or any thing therein contained should not extend or be construed to extend to give any ease, benefit or advantage to persons denying the Trinity as therein mentioned, be and the same is hereby repealed.

II. And be it further enacted, that the provisions of another act passed in the ninth and tenth years of the reign of King William, intituled, " An Act for the more effectual suppressing Blasphemy and Profaneness, so far as the same relates to persons denying as therein mentioned, respecting the Holy Trinity, be and the same are hereby repealed."

III. " And whereas, it is expedient to repeal an act, passed in the parliament of Scotland, in the first parliament of King Charles the Second, intituled, ' An Act against the crime of Blasphemy ;' and another act, passed in the parliament of Scotland, in the first parliament of King William, intituled, ' An Act against Blasphemy ; which acts respectively ordain the punishment of death ;" be it therefore enacted, that the said acts and each of them shall be, and the same are, and is hereby repealed."

IV. And be it further enacted, that this act shall be deemed and taken to be a public act, and shall be judicially taken notice of as such by all judges, justices, and others, without being specially pleaded.

No. V.

DECLARATION

OF THE FAITH, CHURCH ORDER, AND DISCIPLINE, OF THE CONGREGATIONAL OR INDEPENDENT DISSENTERS, AS ADOPTED AT THE THIRD GENERAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATIONAL UNION OF ENGLAND AND WALES, HELD AT THE CONGREGATIONAL LIBRARY, LONDON, MAY 7TH, 8TH, AND 10TH, 1833.

ADVERTISEMENT.—As there is reason to believe that the opinions of the Congregational Dissenters have been greatly misunderstood and even misrepresented, and that a large body of their countrymen suppose them to be either *Socinians* or *Methodists*, the attention of the brethren assembled at the general meeting of the CONGREGATIONAL UNION, held in London, May 11, 1832, was invited to the subject, and they were requested to deliberate on the best methods of disabusing the public mind. A DECLARATION of Faith and Church Order was suggested, and the draught of such a document was submitted for their consideration. On a business of such moment, it was determined, however, first to consult the associated Ministers and Churches of the respective County and District Unions, whether, in accordance with the example of their Nonconformist ancestors, it be desirable to publish a Declaration of the leading articles of their faith and practice; and whether, if it be deemed advisable, that Declaration should be made by such a statement as that which had been presented to them.

The proposed Declaration was accordingly appended to the printed report of the meeting, and in that form submitted for the consideration of the County and District Associations.

At the last general meeting it was found that the publication of a Declaration is deemed to be expedient, and that the draught had "met with the general approbation of the churches," subject to the verbal alterations that had been suggested in various quarters: an open committee was therefore appointed for its final revision.

On Friday, May 10th, 1833, it was presented by that committee in its revised state, to the general meeting, and unanimously adopted "as the Declaration of the Congregational Body, with the distinct understanding, that it is not intended as a Test or Creed for Subscription," as is, indeed, stated in the "Preliminary Notes." In accordance with the wishes of that meeting, it is now put forth in

a brief and cheap form; but the committee have in preparation a larger edition, including "An introductory Sketch of their Denominational History, with an Appendix, containing a summary View of the present state of the Congregational Body," for the information of the churches and the public at large.

J. Blackburn,
W. S. Palmer,
Joshua Wilson, } *Secretaries.*

London, August 6th, 1833.

DECLARATION.

The Congregational churches in England and Wales, frequently called Independent, hold the following doctrines, as of divine authority, and as the foundation of Christian faith and practice.

They are also formed and governed according to the principles hereinafter stated.

Preliminary Notes.

1. It is not designed, in the following summary, to do more than to state the leading doctrines of faith and order maintained by Congregational churches in general.

2. It is not proposed to offer any *proofs*, *reasons*, or *arguments*, in support of the doctrines herein stated, but simply to *declare* what the denomination believes to be taught by the pen of inspiration.

3. It is not intended to present a *scholastic* or *critical* confession of faith, but merely such a statement as any intelligent member of the body might offer, as containing its leading principles.

4. It is not intended that the following statement should be put forth with any authority, or as a standard to which assent should be required.

5. Disallowing the utility of creeds and articles of religion as a bond of union, and protesting against subscription to any human formularies, as a term of communion, Congregationalists are yet willing to declare, for general information, what is commonly believed among them; reserving to every one the most perfect liberty of conscience.

6. Upon some minor points of doctrine and practice, they, differing among themselves, allow to each other the right to form an unbiassed judgment of the word of God.

7. They wish it to be observed, that, notwithstanding their jealousy of subscription to creeds and articles, and their disapproval

of the imposition of any human standard, whether of faith or discipline, they are far more agreed in their doctrines and practices, than any church which enjoins subscription, and enforces a human standard of orthodoxy; and they believe that there is no minister and no church among them, that would deny the substance of any one of the following doctrines of religion, though each might prefer to state his sentiments in his own way.

Principles of Religion.

I. The Scriptures of the Old Testament, as received by the Jews, and the books of the New Testament, as received by the primitive Christians from the Evangelists and Apostles, Congregational churches believe to be divinely inspired, and of supreme authority. These writings, in the languages in which they were originally composed, are to be consulted, by the aids of sound criticism, as a final appeal in all controversies; but the common version they consider to be adequate to the ordinary purposes of Christian instruction and edification.

II. They believe in one God, essentially wise, holy, just, and good; eternal, infinite, and immutable, in all natural and moral perfections; the Creator, Supporter, and Governor of all beings, and of all things.

III. They believe that God is revealed in the Scriptures, as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and that to each are attributed the same divine properties and perfections. The doctrine of the divine existence, as above stated, they cordially believe, without attempting fully to explain.

IV. They believe that man was created after the divine image, sinless, and in his kind perfect.

V. They believe that the first man disobeyed the divine command, fell from his state of innocence and purity, and involved all his posterity in the consequences of that fall.

VI. They believe that therefore all mankind are born in sin, and that a fatal inclination to moral evil, utterly incurable by human means, is inherent in every descendant of Adam.

VII. They believe that God having, before the foundation of the world, designed to redeem fallen man, made disclosures of his mercy, which were the grounds of faith and hope from the earliest ages.

VIII. They believe that God revealed more fully to Abraham the covenant of his grace; and, having promised that from his descen-

dants should arise the Deliverer and Redeemer of mankind, set that patriarch and his posterity apart, as a race specially favoured and separated to his service; a peculiar church, formed and carefully preserved, under the divine sanction and government, until the birth of the promised Messiah.

IX. They believe that, in the fulness of the time, the Son of God was manifested in the flesh, being born of the Virgin Mary, but conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit; and that our Lord Jesus Christ was both the Son of man, and the Son of God;—partaking fully and truly of human nature, though without sin,—equal with the Father, and "the express image of his person."

X. They believe that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, revealed, either personally in his own ministry, or by the Holy Spirit in the ministry of his apostles, the whole mind of God, for our salvation; and that by his obedience to the divine law while he lived, and by his sufferings unto death, he meritoriously "obtained eternal redemption for us;" having thereby vindicated and illustrated divine justice, "magnified the law," and "brought in everlasting righteousness."

XI. They believe that, after his death and resurrection, he ascended up into heaven, where, as the Mediator, he "ever liveth" to rule over all, and to "make intercession for them that come unto God by him."

XII. They believe that the Holy Spirit is given in consequence of Christ's mediation, to quicken and renew the hearts of men; and that his influence is indispensably necessary to bring a sinner to true repentance, to produce saving faith, to regenerate the heart, and to perfect our sanctification.

XIII. They believe that we are justified through faith in Christ; as "the Lord our righteousness," and not "by the works of the law."

XIV. They believe that all who will be saved were the objects of God's eternal and electing love, and were given by an act of divine sovereignty to the Son of God; which in no way interferes with the system of means, nor with the grounds of human responsibility; being wholly unrevealed as to its objects, and not a rule of human duty.

XV. They believe that the Scriptures teach the final perseverance of all true believers to a state of eternal blessedness, which they are appointed to obtain through constant faith in Christ, and uniform obedience to his commands.

XVI. They believe that a holy life will be the necessary effect of

a true faith, and that good works are the certain fruits of a vital union to Christ.

XVII. They believe that the sanctification of true Christians, or their growth in the graces of the Spirit, and meetness for heaven, is gradually carried on through the whole period during which it pleases God to continue them in the present life; and that, at death, their souls, perfectly freed from all remains of evil, are immediately received into the presence of Christ.

XVIII. They believe in the perpetual obligation of Baptism and the Lord's Supper: the former to be administered to all converts to Christianity and their children, by the application of water to the subject, "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" and the latter to be celebrated by Christian churches as a token of faith in the Saviour, and of brotherly love.

XIX. They believe that Christ will finally come to judge the whole human race, according to their works; that the bodies of the dead will be raised again; and that, as the Supreme Judge, he will divide the righteous from the wicked, will receive the righteous into "life everlasting," but send away the wicked into "everlasting punishment."

XX. They believe that Jesus Christ directed his followers to live together in Christian fellowship, and to maintain the communion of saints; and that, for this purpose, they are jointly to observe all divine ordinances, and maintain that church order and discipline, which is either expressly enjoined by inspired institution, or sanctioned by the undoubted example of the apostles and of apostolic churches.

Principles of Church Order and Discipline.

1. The congregational churches hold it to be the will of Christ that true believers should voluntarily assemble together to observe religious ordinances, to promote mutual edification and holiness, to perpetuate and propagate the gospel in the world, and to advance the glory and worship of God, through Jesus Christ; and that each society of believers, having these objects in view in its formation, is properly a Christian church.

II. They believe that the New Testament contains, either in the form of express statute, or in the example and practice of apostles and apostolic churches, all the articles of faith necessary to be believed, and all the principles of order and discipline requisite for

constituting and governing Christian societies; and that human traditions, fathers and councils, canons and creeds, possess no authority over the faith and practice of Christians.

III. They acknowledge Christ as the only head of the church, and the officers of each church under him, as ordained to administer his laws impartially to all; and their only appeal, in all questions touching their religious faith and practice, is to the Sacred Scriptures.

IV. They believe that the New Testament authorizes every Christian church to elect its own officers, to manage all its own affairs, and to stand independent of, and irresponsible to, all authority, saving that only of the Supreme and Divine Head of the church, the Lord Jesus Christ.

V. They believe that the only officers placed by the apostles over individual churches, are the bishops or pastors, and the deacons; the number of these being dependent upon the numbers of the church; and that to these, as the officers of the church, is committed respectively the administration of its spiritual and temporal concerns—subject, however, to the approbation of the church.

VI. They believe that no persons should be received as members of Christian churches, but such as make a credible profession of Christianity, are living according to its precepts, and attest a willingness to be subject to its discipline; and that none should be excluded from the fellowship of the church, but such as deny the faith of Christ, violate his laws, or refuse to submit themselves to the discipline which the word of God enforces.

VII. The power of admission into any Christian church, and rejection from it, they believe to be vested in the church itself, and to be exercised only through the medium of its own officers.

VIII. They believe that Christian churches should statedly meet for the celebration of public worship, for the observance of the Lord's Supper, and for the sanctification of the first day of the week.

IX. They believe that the power of a Christian church is purely spiritual, and should in no way be corrupted by union with temporal or civil power.

X. They believe that it is the duty of Christian churches to hold communion with each other, to entertain an enlarged affection for each other, as members of the same body, and to co-operate for the promotion of the Christian cause: but that no church, nor union of churches, has any right or power to interfere with the faith or dis-

cipline of any other church, further than to separate from such as, in faith or practice, depart from the gospel of Christ.

XI. They believe that it is the privilege and duty of every church to call forth such of its members as may appear to be qualified, by the Holy Spirit, to sustain the office of the ministry: and that Christian churches unitedly ought to consider the maintenance of the Christian ministry in an adequate degree of learning, as one of its especial cares; that the cause of the Gospel may be both honourably sustained, and constantly promoted.

XII. They believe that church officers, whether bishops or deacons, should be chosen by the free voice of the church, but that their dedication to the duties of their office should take place with special prayer, and by solemn designation, to which most of the churches add the imposition of hands by those already in office.

XIII. They believe that the fellowship of every Christian church should be so liberal as to admit to communion in the Lord's Supper, all whose faith and godliness are, on the whole, undoubted, though conscientiously differing in points of minor importance; and that this outward sign of fraternity in Christ should be co-extensive with the fraternity itself, though without involving any compliances which conscience would deem to be sinful.

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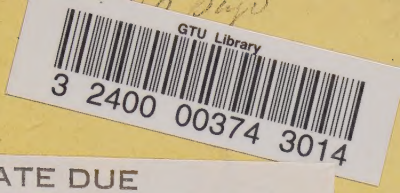

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